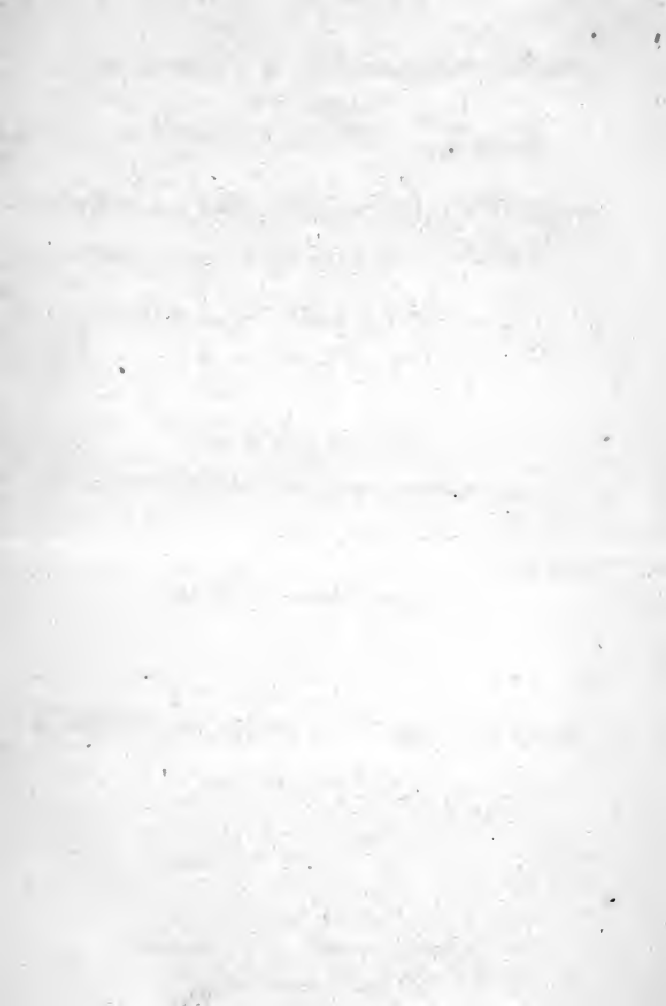




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Nine sermons on important
doctrinal and practical

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THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF KING CHARLES THE FIRST

BY JOHN BURNET

IN TWO VOLUMES

LONDON, Printed by J. Sturges, in the Strand, 1724.

THE SECOND VOLUME

1724

A NEW EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS

AND CORRECTIONS

BY JOHN BURNET

AND JOHN HANCOCK

1724

NINE SERMONS

ON IMPORTANT

DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL SUBJECTS,

DELIVERED IN PHILADELPHIA, NOVEMBER, 1834.

BY HOSEA BALLOU,

PASTOR OF THE SECOND UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY IN BOSTON.

TAKEN IN SHORT HAND.

WITH

A BRIEF MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR,

AND AN APPENDIX.

PHILADELPHIA:

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District of Pennsylvania.

PREFACE.

The Sermons of which this volume is composed, were delivered during a visit of the author to Philadelphia, in the month of November, 1834. With the exception of the second Sermon, they were taken down by an able stenographer of this city—from whom the MSS. were purchased by the publisher. The exception referred to was written out and furnished by the author, in compliance with the urgent solicitation of the undersigned.

It is confidently believed that the stenographer did ample justice to the speaker. As the discourses were delivered without notes of any description, the occurrence of occasional repetitions was to have been expected. These the publisher has taken the liberty to expunge. He has also exercised the privilege of an editor, in supplying such remarks and citations as seemed required fully to express the meaning of the preacher. Persons who are accustomed to extemporaneous speaking, are aware, that an occasional omission of this description will occur in their public communications.

The Sermons are all on important doctrinal and practical subjects. They cannot fail to interest and edify the reader. They are distinguished by patient reflection, deep penetration, and sound logic.—The doctrinal features are prominently developed, and the practical influences ably delineated. In a word, the Sermons are strongly characteristic of HOSEA BALLOU—and every one who has attentively perused any of his productions, will understand what I mean.

The discourse entitled, "Growth in Knowledge and Grace," was delivered by request of the "Young Men's Universalist Institute." It is a production replete with sound argument and wholesome advice. The members of the association unanimously tendered to Br. Ballou the expression of their unfeigned gratitude, for his cheerful compliance with their request. And they fervently pray, that the

exhortations and instructions of that aged minister of the reconciliation, may be long remembered and practically regarded by the Institute.

The principal part of the "Memoir of the Author," is extracted from Whittemore's "Modern History of Universalism"—for which valuable and interesting work, it was specially written by Br. Ballou.

The articles inserted in the Appendix, are offered in illustration of portions of some of the Sermons. The Address of the Philadelphia Universalist Institute is specially commended to the attention of the reader.

A. C. T.

Philadelphia, January, 1835.

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BRIEF MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

HOSEA BALLOU was born in the town of Richmond, N. H., April 30, 1771. The circumstances which induced his youthful connexion with the Calvinistic church of which his father was pastor, and his subsequent advances in religious knowledge, are stated in the following auto-biographical sketch:—

“As to the doctrine of Calvinism, in which my honoured father was a believer, and which doctrine he preached until nearly the end of his public labours, my acquaintance with its various tenets, while quite a youth, was by no means very limited. Owing to the pious endeavours of a parent, whose affections for his children rendered him extremely anxious for their spiritual welfare, and to an early desire of my own to understand the doctrine of Christianity correctly, I was well acquainted with the most common arguments which were used in support of predestination, election, reprobation, the fall of man, the penal sufferings of Christ for the elect, the justice of reprobation, and many other particulars, such as regard the moral agency of man and his inability to regenerate himself, the sovereignty and irresistibility of regenerating grace, &c. &c.

When I was in my nineteenth year, there was what was termed a reformation in the vicinity where I lived, and many of my young friends and acquaintances professed religion and joined the Baptist church, of which my father was pastor. At this time I became more specially attentive to the subject of religion, and thought it my duty to become a professor, and to join the church, which I did, in the sincerity of my heart, in the month of January, 1789. From that period to the present I have been a constant student of the science of divinity. But owing to the strongly rooted prejudices which had so early taken possession of my mind, and to circumstances which necessarily limited my means, in youth, of acquiring knowledge, my progress has been but small.

At the time I joined the Baptist church, there were in Richmond and Warwick, a few individuals, who called themselves Universalists, and who occasionally heard Br. Caleb Rich hold forth that doctrine. There was also an elderly gentleman by the name of Balou, a distant relation of my father, who also occasionally preached the same doctrine. These individuals frequently attended the Baptist meetings, and being of my acquaintance, we often conversed on the question, whether all mankind would alike be made partakers of the salvation of God. In those conversations I frequently found that my Calvinistic tenets could be managed either to result in Universal Salvation, or to compel me to acknowledge the *partiality* of the divine favour. This gave me no small inquietude of mind; as I was always unable to derive satisfaction from sentiments which I could not defend. That which more than any thing else contributed to turn my thoughts seriously towards the belief of Universal Salvation, was the ardent desires, with which I found myself exercised, that sinners might be brought to repentance and salvation. I found it utterly impossible to bring the feelings of my heart to conform to the doctrine of eternal reprobation; and I was compelled to allow, either that such feelings were sinful, or that my heavenly Father, in giving them to me, had imparted an evidence in favour of the salvation of all men, the force of which I found no means to resist. As yet I was, like young converts in general, very little acquainted with the Scriptures. But the trials which I was then undergoing led me to examine the written word, to satisfy myself on the great question which had such weight on my mind. On reading the Bible, there would now and then, here and there, a passage appear to favour the doctrine of universal, and impartial grace. But all the prejudices of my early education, in those things, were arrayed against my making any advances. But in the spring following my union with the Baptist church, I left Richmond, my native place, and went with my brother Stephen, next older to myself, who joined the church a short time after me, to Hartford, in N. Y. then called Westfield, where we spent the summer. In this town there was a Baptist church and congregation, enjoying the pastoral labours of Elder Brown, on whose ministry we attended. My brother was apprehensive that my mind was inclined to Universalism; and told me that he had a desire that I should converse with Elder Brown on the subject, by which means he hoped I should become fully convinced that the doctrine was false, and be more settled in the belief in which I had made profession. It must be here understood that I was, by no means, at that time settled in my faith. There was, at

my brother's request, a conference appointed, after public service, on the Sabbath, for Elder Brown to convince me that I ought to give no heed to the doctrine which laboured in my mind. Accordingly we met. The Elder requested me to turn to some passage of scripture which appeared to me favourable to Universalism; promising to do his endeavours to show me the error of applying it in favour of such a doctrine. I well remember the apparent confidence which this man manifested when he took his seat, and called on me to find some scripture, that in the least favoured so dangerous an error. I opened to the 5th chapter of Romans. I had read this chapter with much attention, and was tolerably acquainted with its several parts and their relation to each other. I directed him to the 18th verse; and told him that I was unable to understand the passage, if it agreed with the doctrine of the eternal reprobation of any of the human family. He immediately began, in his way, to speak very loudly, and nothing to the subject. When he would stop, I had only to inform him that what he had offered had no relation to the text I had produced; and by showing him that the same *all men* who were under condemnation in the first member of the text, were under justification in the last, evidently confused his mind and immediately turned it sour. He was no longer able to converse, with a right spirit, and prudence dictated a discontinuance. My brother now grew more uneasy, and told me that he was sorry I had conversed with Elder Brown. "For," said he, "as he could by no means answer you, and as he manifested anger, you will think you had the best of the argument, and will feel encouraged to indulge favourable thoughts of Universalism." You cannot suppose that I now use the very words which were used in conversation so long ago; I am careful only to give you the subject. As to this Elder Brown, I am far from wishing to represent him in an unfavourable light. I believe he was a worthy man. But it is a fact, that he was extremely ignorant of the subject, having had, as I presume, no acquaintance with the views of Universalists, or with their manner of arguing.—I continued my researches with no small solicitude; and by reading the Scriptures, and by conversing with those who opposed the doctrine, before I returned the next fall, to Richmond, my mind was quite settled in the consoling belief that God will finally have mercy on all men. On my return I found that my brother, David Ballou, whose age is some over twelve years advanced of mine, had not only openly professed Universal Salvation, but had commenced preaching the doctrine. I spent most of my time with him until the fall before I was twenty-one, when I began to speak in public, believing and

preaching Universal Salvation, on the Calvinistic principles of atonement, and imputed righteousness.—Soon after it was known that I believed in the doctrine, I was excommunicated from the Church, and was honoured with a copy of the document, carefully stating that no fault was found in me, excepting that I believed that God would finally save all men.

I never read any thing on the doctrine of Universal Salvation before I believed it, the Bible excepted; nor did I know, that I now recollect, that there was any thing published in its vindication in the world. Nor had I ever heard a sermon on the subject, except when in boyhood I heard Br. Rich—but concerning the sermon I realised nothing.

It was some time after I was a preacher of the doctrine, that I became acquainted with Rely's peculiar system; and if my memory serves me correctly, I had left the principles of Calvinism entirely, in relation to atonement, before I learned from Br. Murray the tenets which he received from Mr. Rely.

I had preached but a short time before my mind was entirely freed from all the perplexities of the doctrine of the trinity, and the common notion of atonement. But in making these advances, as I am disposed to call them, I had the assistance of no author, or writer.—As fast as those old doctrines were, by any means, rendered the subjects of inquiry, in my mind, they became exploded. But it would be difficult for me now to recall the particular incidents which suggested queries in my mind respecting them. It may be proper for me here to state one circumstance, which, no doubt, had no small tendency to bring me on to the ground where I have for many years felt established. It was my reading some deistical writings. By this means I was led to see that it was utterly impossible to maintain Christianity as it had been generally believed in the church. This led me, of course, to examine the Scriptures, that I might determine the question, whether they did really teach that Jesus Christ died to reconcile an unchangeable God to his own creatures? You cannot suppose that I was long in finding that so far from teaching such absurdities, the Scriptures teach that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." The question respecting the trinity was, by the same means, as speedily settled. But I cannot say, for certainty, what year I became a Unitarian, but it was long before I wrote my Treatise on Atonement, the date of which you have.

Respecting the doctrine of a future state of retribution there was, in my youth, but little said. Universalists having obtained satisfac-

tion that none of the human race would suffer endless punishment, thought they had sufficient reason to rejoice with exceeding joy, and to glory in the mercy of God. I never made the question a subject of close investigation until lately. When I wrote my Notes on the Parables, and my Treatise on Atonement, I had travelled, in my mind, away from penal sufferings, so entirely, that I was satisfied that if any suffered in the future state, it would be because they would be sinful in that state. But I cannot say that I was fully satisfied, that the Bible taught no punishment in the future world, until I obtained this satisfaction by attending to the subject with Br. Edward Turner, then of Charlestown. For the purpose of satisfying ourselves respecting the doctrine of the Scriptures, on this question, we agreed to do the best we could; he in favour of future punishment, and I the contrary. Our investigations were published in a periodical, called the Gospel Visitant. While attending to this correspondence, I became entirely satisfied that the Scriptures begin and end the history of sin in flesh and blood; and that beyond this mortal existence the Bible teaches no other sentient state but that which is called by the blessed name of life and immortality.

When I sat down to reply to Br. Turner, who urged the passage in Peter, respecting the spirits in prison, I knew not by what means I could explain the text without allowing it to favour the doctrine of future sufferings. I had, at that time, no knowledge of any translation of the text, but the one in our common version. But on reading the whole subject in connexion, the light broke in on my mind, and I was satisfied that Peter alluded to the Gentiles, by spirits in prison, which made the passage agree with Isaiah 42d."

Mr. Ballou's first settlement as a Universalist preacher, was in the town of Dana, Mass. After the expiration of some years, he was induced to remove to Barnard, Vt. While resident at this place, he wrote his "Treatise on the Atonement," and "Notes on the Parables." Six years from the time of locating in Barnard, Mr. Ballou removed to Portsmouth, N. H. Here he remained for about six years, and then removed to Salem, Mass. In 1817, he accepted the invitation of the Second Universalist Society in Boston to become their Pastor, and as such he was installed on the 15th of December. He still sustains said official character.

Mr. Ballou is in the 64th year of his age—yet "his eye is not dim, nor is his natural force abated." His public communications are

distinguished by extraordinary penetration, perfect knowledge of human nature, aptness of illustration, and closeness of reasoning. In private intercourse, he manifests the feelings of a heart baptized into the spirit of the living God. It is impossible to listen to his public exhibitions of love divine, without according to him the meed of sincerity and intellectual power; and it is equally impossible to mingle with him in the walks of social life, without loving him from the heart.

The following is a list of Mr. Ballou's works:—"Treatise on the Atonement"—"Notes on the Parables"—"XXVI Lectures"—"XXV Select Sermons"—"Candid Review"—"XI Sermons," delivered in Philadelphia in 1821-2—"Examination of Future Retribution"—"Letters in Defence of Divine Revelation"—besides many smaller publications.

A. C. T.

BALLOU'S NINE SERMONS.

SERMON I.

*Delivered in the Callowhill Street Church, Sunday Morning,
November 2, 1834.*

JESUS A WITNESS, LEADER, AND COMMANDER.

“Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.”—ISAIAH lv. 4.

I deem it unnecessary to occupy any of your time, in proving that this is a prophecy concerning the great Messiah. The connexion in which the passage is found, fully justifies this conclusion, and it is not controverted by any Christian sect. We shall therefore proceed directly to speak of the Messiah, even of Jesus, as sustaining the several characters mentioned in the text.

In the first place, we shall speak of him in the character of a **WITNESS**:

In the second place, in the character of a **LEADER**:

In the third place, in the character of a **COMMANDER**. “Behold, I have given him for a *Witness* to the people, a *Leader* and *Commander* to the people.”

Let us inquire, in the first place, into the utility and necessity of a **WITNESS**. And by attending to

this inquiry, we shall naturally be led to attempt the correction of some errors, which have almost imperceptibly crept into the Christian church.

The office and work of a witness is, to make known the truth, not to those who already know it, but to those who are not in possession of the knowledge thereof. When a witness is called into any of your courts of justice, it is in order that he may bring to your knowledge facts and circumstances which have a bearing on the case in hand, that those who are judges in the matter may obtain the information that is necessary to form correct judgment. A witness is not expected to make any thing true that is not true before his testimony is heard. No person supposes that the testimony of any witness will make that true which is *not* true. A faithful witness testifies only to facts which are true before his testimony is given.

Here, then, you perceive that Christ, the Saviour of the world, in the character of a witness, makes nothing known to the children of men but what was true before he came into the world. Every point of doctrine that Jesus taught to the people, was just as true before he came, as it has been since. Every divine promise contained in the Scriptures, in relation to the gift of everlasting salvation, and in reference to being blessed of God forever, was equally true before the advent of Jesus, as it has been since, or ever will be.

So far from having these views distinctly in their minds, many Christians have supposed that the truth of the Christian system began to exist about eighteen hundred years since! They talk about the Gospel, and the Christian religion, and the scheme

of man's salvation, as though these things had their beginning at the time the Saviour entered upon his ministry! But this is not the case. All truth is coeval with the Divine existence—and consequently the doctrines above mentioned, were just as true before Jesus proclaimed them to the world as they are now.

“But,” says the hearer, “if this be so, we do not perceive the necessity of the mission of Christ.” My hearers, be not too hasty. The Messiah came in the character, and to do the work, of a *witness*—to make that known which was true before he came. As I have already remarked, a witness comes to manifest that which was true before his testimony is heard, and not to make something true by merely testifying to its existence.

According to the views of thousands of Christians, the truth of the whole scheme of man's salvation depends entirely upon our believing it! This is another step in error. They seem to suppose that the thing to be believed, is not true until it is believed. Now, your common sense teaches you better than this. You know that believing a thing does not make it true, neither does disbelieving a thing make it false.

Says the objector, “I never could see any utility in, or necessity for preaching, if your doctrine of Universal Salvation be true.” And yet, my hearers, you readily perceive that the position we have laid down, is approved and admitted by common sense. The testimony of a witness is to confirm, and not to make a thing true by testifying to it.—Allow me to present an illustration. Suppose this congregation was induced to believe, that the sun

would never rise again. If you really thought so, you would become melancholy in a moment. You would exhibit distress and perplexity in your countenances; and you would probably be well nigh frightened out of your senses. You would say, "What! shall we never again behold the glorious sun—never again feel his invigorating and cheering rays!" Never, no, never. Now, the truth of the case is, as the laws of nature have established it. Would your unbelief prevent the sun from rising? Would your unbelief make any difference as to the matter? Yes, just as much difference as it would in regard to the simple truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; but all the unbelief that ever existed, or ever will exist, can never make it false. The Apostle Paul has stated an important question, referring to this subject:—"What if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." Unbelief may beget lies by the million; but it cannot change truth into falsehood.

When Jesus was brought before Pilate, he said to that magistrate, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." Yes, my friendly hearers, this was the great end and object of the mission of the Messiah—"to bear witness unto the truth." But the truth to which he testified, was truth before he came into the world. He is spoken of as "the faithful and true witness;" and he is thus spoken of, because he was faithful in proclaiming the great truths he was sent into the world to bear witness unto. Do you still inquire, "what necessity was there for his coming?" It was that man might know

the truth, and rejoice in it. "Ye shall know the truth," saith our Lord, "and the truth shall make you free."

Suppose I should see this congregation in the situation before referred to—all believing that the sun would never rise again, and that eternal night, in all its cheerless darkness, would cover the world. And suppose that your humble servant enjoys the converse opinion, and believes that the sun *will* rise again, and continue to rise, in all its beauty and loveliness. Would it not be kindness in him to attempt the correction of your tormenting error, and deliver you from your gloomy forebodings? And were he to succeed in his endeavours, would you not be filled with joy? Certainly. Suppose I should succeed in convincing only one or two individuals, would they not leap with joy and gladness? And certainly if I could effect this object, it would be my duty to confer such pleasure on every one.—Do you think it would give pain and distress to a father or mother, to see a son or daughter rejoicing in the belief that the sun would rise again? Certainly not. Would you not think that the heart of the parent who could in such a case treat a child with coldness and abuse, because it believed the joyful truth, was as cold and unfeeling as the earth? My friends, I am sure you would. And yet we have seen something precisely like it. How many cases have occurred, in which children have been treated with coldness, and even with cruelty, by their parents, simply because those children believed and rejoiced in the Gospel of universal and efficient grace!

Jesus, my hearers, came as a messenger of peace. He came to bear witness to the truth. And the truth to which he came to bear witness, was the truth of the covenant which God made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. "In thee and in thy seed shall all the nations, families and kindreds of the earth be blessed." Paul, in his Epistle to the Galatians, has referred to this covenant. "And the Scriptures, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel to Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." And when the same Apostle was at Antioch, he said, "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made to the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again." In another place, he says, "Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."

And you will perceive that Jesus has borne the same testimony to the world that God proclaimed to Abraham. He proves to us, that God is love. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. [This is the old-fashioned doctrine, which Jesus came to condemn.] But I say, Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Now what is the sum of all this testimony? It is, that God loves all upon whom the sun shines and the rain descends.— These things you always have before your senses.

And remember, when you see the sun shine, and when joy and animation are around you, that as truly as the sun shines, God loves us. And when you see the rain descend, and when with rapturous emotions you behold its refreshing influences, remember that as truly as the rain descends, God loves us. Until you can find partiality in the sunshine and rain, never allow yourselves to believe that there is partiality in the love of God.

This particular topic is more than sufficient to furnish matter for this discourse; but what I have already offered on this subject may serve as an index to point to the great matter before us; and I hope you will pursue these considerations in your private reflections.

The whole that Jesus spoke and performed in the world, his death, and his resurrection to life and immortality, was but to make known that which was true before. The Scriptures declare, that "life and immortality were brought to light through the Gospel." Mark the expression—"brought to light," not created. All this was as true before the coming of Jesus, as it has been since. But "when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." And as the Apostle testifies, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Most fervently may we exclaim, "Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will to men!"

The second character of Christ, mentioned in the text, is that of a LEADER.—Human society exists by certain laws; and men, as members of community, need some one to lead and go before them, in order

that they make suitable advances. It is necessary that it should be so. And Jesus acts in this capacity. We are directed, by the Christian religion, to look to him. "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

You will clearly perceive, that it is our duty, as professors of Christianity, to keep an eye upon our *leader* who has gone before us. Are there sufferings to be endured in promoting the cause of truth? Look unto Jesus, and be stimulated to your duty. He was reviled, and set at nought—he was "despised and rejected of men." It is the Christian's duty to walk in the steps of *the leader*. How do your orators appeal to your feelings on occasions of public celebrations? How do they enlist your sympathies and feelings for the institutions of the country? They desire you to look at the toils, the conflicts, the labors, that the blessings of liberty cost your forefathers! They urge upon your attention, the fact, that it is your duty to look to the example of the great apostles of political liberty. And shall we shrink from following our religious leader, even Jesus, because there are some inconveniences to be encountered? When you think of those who watered the tree of liberty with their own blood, you feel a strong enthusiasm kindling in your bosoms; and suffering would rather be courted than shunned in such a cause! Ought Christian enthusiasm to be less ardent in the Christian's breast?

My friendly hearers, we must keep our eyes steadily fixed on the great leader. Wherever he

went, it is safe for us to go. "He went about doing good." Do you desire to know how to think and act as Jesus thought and acted? Look at his example, and follow in his steps. Do you meet with opposition and persecution in your religious devotions? Jesus met with the same—and he treated it with kindness and affection. And how did he treat his enemies, even in the last moments of his life? He prayed for them! "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." Surely, this was the Son of God! Surely in him we have a leader whom we can safely follow. Let his spirit always be ours; and let the light of his example continually direct our steps—for the Lord gave him as "a leader to the people."

There is another character which Jesus sustains, to which due attention should be given. He is not only a witness and a leader—he is also a **COMMANDER**. In this character he has authority. "He spake as one having authority, and not as the Scribes." In the character of a commander, he is vested with power. God "gave him power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life to as many as the father had given him." He not only has authority to command, but he has power to compel obedience. "Be careful," says the hearer; "you are in danger of going too far. In making out Universal Salvation, you may have to dispense with moral agency. You must do this, in order to prove that Christ, as a commander, will save any against their will."

My hearers, I would tenderly regard the feelings of a brother, who is so unhappy as to believe that

human agency can finally frustrate the designs of the everlasting mercy of God; and I would not intentionally utter a word to wound his feelings. I entertain no other than friendly emotions toward such brethren. But as all false doctrines are calculated to injure those who are deluded by them, I feel impelled, as a friend to my fellow creatures, to dissuade them from such views, if in my power—just as I remarked a few moments since in relation to the sun. If I can save any one from the torment of false doctrine, it would be a work of charity and love.

“But,” says the hearer, “would you have us to understand that, regardless of human agency, God has determined to effect man’s everlasting salvation? and do you mean, that Christ, by his authority and power, will bring man to happiness, whether he is willing or not?” You have the difficulty plainly before you—and I now wish to inquire, whether there would be any difficulty in the case, if you knew that this commander has a means of working a will in the transgressor? All the difficulty is in this,—man has a will opposed to the will of the Saviour. Now suppose this heavenly commander has authority and power to work a will conformable to his own—would there be any difficulty then? “No, certainly not,” says the hearer. Listen, then, to this testimony: “For it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.” So says the Apostle Paul. And David says, in speaking of the commander mentioned in the text, “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauty of holiness from the womb of the

morning." In the light of these testimonies, it is plain, that as the Divine will is, so the will of man must eventually be.

"But that will make machines of us," says the objector. Well, if you please, let it be so. It will make just such machines of us as God intended we should be. Let us reason together a moment. You will allow that God made man as he pleased. "Yes." Do we possess any agency,—no matter of what kind,—that God did not give us? "No." Is not God the author of it, and did he not bestow upon us all the agency we possess? "Certainly." Now, if he made this agency, was it not for a definite purpose? Our eyes were made to see with—we see with them. Our ears were made to hear with—we hear with them. Just so do all the parts of the human system answer the purpose designed by the Creator. The question then comes up, Does man's agency answer the purpose for which it was intended? "Certainly it must," says the hearer. And this conclusion destroys the objection. We can raise no greater objection concerning human agency, than we can concerning any other thing which God has made.

Suppose a mechanic makes a clock, intending that it shall keep correct time,—but before he finishes it, he puts into it a little wheel which shall defeat the object intended to be accomplished in making the clock. What is the conclusion in your mind about this mechanic? "Why," says the hearer, "he could not have intended the clock to keep correct time, if he put that little wheel into it in order to defeat his own purpose, or knowing at the time that his purpose would thus be defeated."

Now, my Christian friends, God never put any agency into us that shall finally frustrate his purpose in creating us. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive blessing, and glory, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

Let us instance a case. Look at Saul of Tarsus. He preached against the church of Christ; he persecuted the Christians even unto strange cities; and he went toward Damascus, having received authority to take men and women, and put them to death.—Now, if there ever was a hardened, self-willed transgressor, it was Saul. He was stopped on his journey. He fell prostrate to the earth. He heard a voice, saying in the Hebrew tongue, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" A very simple question, truly! No violence was done to his agency,—no force was employed in the case,—only a plain, simple question was asked. And what was the reply? "Who art thou, Lord?" "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Now listen to Saul's rejoinder: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Was there any violation of moral agency here? There was not. Jesus then commanded him thus: "Rise and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make of thee a minister and a witness, both of the things which thou hast seen, and of the things in which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, to whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness unto light, and from the power of satan unto God."

In this language, Christ tells Saul, that he had appeared unto him to make of him a minister and a

witness. This infuriated persecutor, who a few moments before, was breathing out slaughter and vengeance against the Christian disciples, was converted at once into a minister and a witness of the Gospel of heaven! And yet there was no violence offered to the moral agency of Saul. The *commander*, who had authority and power, worked in that persecutor a will conformable to his own. The change effected was ample and complete—and Paul was willing to do whatsoever he was commanded. He was now more willing to suffer persecution in the cause of Christ, than he had previously been to make others suffer for it; and he seemed to glory and delight in the stripes and imprisonments, and the scorn and persecution, with which he met while engaged in the service of his Lord.

In viewing this most interesting and instructive case of conversion, we distinctly perceive, that divine love has an influence, a power, an authority over the human will, not to violate it, but to give it a proper impulse and direction. And we also perceive, that he who effected such an instantaneous and mighty change in Saul of Tarsus, has authority and power to mould the heart of every sinner into the same divine likeness.

I deem the subjects on which we have treated this morning, to be highly important, and I hope you will take them into serious consideration. Weigh the arguments in your own minds; and I desire that you may be able to bring still stronger arguments in support of Divine truth, than you have heard from your humble servant. Keep in view, that Jesus is a *Witness*, a *Leader*, and a *Commander* to

the people. Duly reflect on the important truths to which he testified. You cannot disbelieve his testimony without mourning—you cannot believe it without rejoicing. If you refuse to walk in his footsteps, you will tread the thorny road of iniquity—but if you follow him as your leader, he will lead you to the pastures of his love. If you disobey his commandments, you will find wretchedness and wo—but if you obey him from the heart, you will discover that “the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever.”

I conclude with the exhortation of the Apostle: “The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”

SERMON II.

*Delivered in the Lombard Street Church, Sunday Evening,
November 2, 1834.*

TEST AND TRIAL OF DOCTRINES.

“Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.”—1 THESS. v. 21.

There are many peculiar characteristics which evidently distinguish the gospel and religion of Jesus Christ, from all the creeds and religions which have been invented by the wisdom of men; and it seems a matter of no small moment, that we should be well acquainted with such important marks of distinction; for by such assistance we can, with the utmost ease, detect false doctrine, and readily receive the true. One of these distinguishing peculiarities, we have most evidently set forth in the text, which has been chosen as the foundation of the present discourse.

When learned doctors have, by their profound researches and laborious studies, framed a creed, they are far from supposing that it belongs to them to prove it true in all its parts, but proceed to demand of the people an unhesitating consent to the faith which owes its origin to their profound study and wisdom. The promulgators of such creeds and such doctrines, may be justly represented, as standing before the people with their creed in one hand,

and the truly awful sanctions of their creed in the other. In this solemn attitude, they demand of the people to believe their doctrine implicitly, as a condition of obtaining the divine favour, and of inheriting a state of perfect bliss in the eternal world; while, in case they withhold their entire consent, they are threatened with the severity of the divine displeasure, which they are sure to endure in a state of never-ending sufferings. These are the arguments, and this is the logic, which the wisdom of man employs, to enforce its doctrines on mankind. If you hesitate, if you venture to start objections, if you ask for proof of points which appear unreasonable, unscriptural, and even contradictory, you are immediately accused of impiety, and of a want of respect and reverence for religious truth; and if you finally refuse your full consent without further proof, you are sure to be denounced as a hardened infidel, and told that you must await your awful doom!

Very differently does the gospel and religion of Jesus Christ treat us. As it is a reasonable religion, it addresses itself to our reason and understanding. It calls on us to receive it on its being first proved, and cautions us against believing without evidence. "Prove all things." This our text demands. In this requisition we are assured, that whatever is contained in the religion or faith of Jesus Christ, is capable of being proved, and that it lays no claim to our credence any farther than the proof accompanies its several propositions. We are here even admonished to proceed with caution, to examine minutely, to hold every thing in suspense until reasonable evidence brings the truth to our understandings. In

this way the wisdom of God distinguishes itself from the wisdom of men, and treats us in a manner as different from the treatment which we receive from man's wisdom, as these two wisdoms are different from each other.

The careful attention of the congregation is now solicited to an illustration of what we have already suggested, which we shall find in the conduct of our blessed Saviour, in his treatment of unbelievers.—The Jewish commonwealth, to whom Jesus was sent, was in a state of darkness and unbelief, when he commenced his ministry among them. The first important fact which was necessary to be believed by the people, and to convince them of which he first laboured, was, that he was a teacher sent of God. To induce the people to a belief of this fact, Jesus did not proceed as many teachers have done, even in our times. We are often told, in a very solemn manner, by teachers employed by human wisdom and human authority, that God has sent them; and we have the authority of their most positive declarations to support the assertion. There are many weak minds, persons of delicate nerves, who, beholding the solemn visage of the preacher, and hearing the grave, deep toned modulation of his voice, yield at once to the truth of the assertion, and are thereby prepared to receive every thing he utters as coming from the authority of heaven. So did not Jesus. He never treated unbelievers in this way; nor by such means did he attempt to gain the confidence of the people in his divine commission.

To what did Jesus refer the people for the proof of the fact that God had sent him? Hear his words:

“The works which I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of me.” The miracles which Jesus wrought, were of such a nature and character as could not be mistaken. The physical senses took cognizance of them, and were not in the least liable to be deceived. Had Jesus attempted to impose on the people by any works or performances of an occult nature; or had he endeavoured to persuade the people to receive him as a divine teacher by subtle arts and learned arguments, the case would have been widely different; and if he had succeeded to any extent, yet would he thereby have laid no solid foundation on which he could have built a church, that could not have been overthrown even by the same kind of impositions. But the evidences on which he rested to prove that he was a teacher divinely commissioned, were of such an astonishing character, so open to the inspection of all classes of the people, and under the eyes and inspection of his inveterate enemies, that they must violate the testimony of their senses in order to withhold belief.— If Jesus had pretended to heal the sick, and had not actually done it, he would have been immediately detected; if he had pretended to give sight to the blind, and had not done it, he would have ruined his own character in less than three months; if he had pretended to raise the dead, and had not performed such a miracle, he would not have had his life spared, nor would he have deserved to live. Respecting such works no deception could have been practised. If he had not done these things, the people could not have believed that he did.

You recollect that Nicodemus came to Jesus by night, evidently to communicate to him the fact,

that he and his brethren of the Sanhedrim were convinced that his commission was divine, and to receive instruction from him. He undoubtedly went to Jesus by night, that he might not risk his reputation, and expose himself to be turned out of the Synagogue—to which he would have been exposed if he had openly professed to believe in Jesus. The darkness of night covered him, and shielded him from the odium of being cast out. His declaration goes to establish the point now under consideration. “We know that thou art a teacher sent from God; for no man can do the miracles which thou doest, except God be with him.” He did not speak in the first person singular; he did not say, *I* am convinced of this important fact; but he said, *we* know—that is, *we*, the rulers of this people, know that thou art a teacher sent of God. The miracles which thou doest are proof positive. We are convinced through the medium of our senses; and in our minds the fact is established.—Here we have a most striking example of the manner in which Jesus treated unbelieving men, in order to bring them to the knowledge of the truth. This example shows how unbelievers ought to be treated in all ages, and in all countries. They should be accommodated with the necessary evidences, by which divine truth can be understood and reasonably believed.

When John, the forerunner of the Messiah, had baptized Jesus, he saw him walking, and exclaimed, “Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!” Thus expressing his conviction, that the true and long expected Messiah had actually come. But when Herod had apprehended him, and cast him into prison, it seems that some shades

of doubt passed over his mind; and he wanted some farther assurance of this most desirable truth. He, therefore, sent some of his own disciples to Jesus, to request him to inform him whether he was the one who was to come, or whether they should look for another. What answer did Jesus direct these disciples to return to their master? Did he say, Go and tell John that you have it from my own lips, that I am the Messiah of whom Moses in the law and the prophets have spoken? No: his answer was, "Go, and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." John could no longer doubt. The miracles here specified were done before the eyes of his disciples, and they could not be deceived respecting them. They furnished full proof that Jesus was what John had before believed him to be.

If you please, we will pass in review one of the most inveterate cases of unbelief, which we find on divine record. It is the case of Thomas. After Jesus arose from the dead, and had appeared to some of his disciples, who informed Thomas of the joyful fact, he utterly refused his consent, and said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." Here was one who disbelieved those of his own acquaintance, who had seen Jesus alive from the dead, and had told him that they had seen him. Here was an unbeliever, who expressed his wilful determination not to believe, unless such conditions

could be complied with as he should prescribe. He must not only be convinced by the sense of sight, but must be accommodated with evidence of a tangible nature. How did Jesus treat this wilful unbeliever? Did he condemn him for his incredulity? Did he say, If Thomas refuses to believe, and if he has set up his will against the truth, and is even so presumptuous as to dictate the nature of evidence with which he must be accommodated, let him remain in unbelief, and let him be forever excluded from divine favour, and be doomed to everlasting wo? This would have been a fair example of the present mode of treating unbelievers; but so did not Jesus. Standing in the midst of the disciples, Thomas being present, Jesus said, "Peace be unto you." And turning to Thomas, he said, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered, and said unto him, My Lord, and my God!"—In this faithfully recorded instance of the divine condescension, in overcoming the most determined unbelief, we have most evidently set forth a striking specimen of that wisdom which is from above, which is easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits. And as this wisdom is without partiality, we have no good reason to believe that any unbeliever will ever be forever rejected of the Saviour, for want of evidence to convince him of truth divine.

The doctrine which Jesus taught, was widely different from that which the people had been accustomed to hear from their teachers. This wide distinction he clearly set forth as follows: "Ye have

heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy." This old fashioned doctrine comprises the whole contents of all false doctrines. Love to some, and hatred to others, is the peculiar character of all the doctrines which the partial wisdom of man has ever invented. People in all ages, and in all countries, who have been so taught, and who have so believed, have been ardent in their love to those who loved them, but equally ardent in their hatred of others; and according to their love and their hatred, they have shaped their practices. But Jesus teaches as follows: "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? and if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Here we have the doctrine of Jesus. It teaches us that our Father in heaven loves mankind, both the evil and the good, with an impartiality which is indicated by the sunshine and the rain; and this doctrine requires us to love as our heavenly Father loves.

The hearer is requested to take particular notice of the fact, that Jesus accompanied his doctrine and his precept with such proof as the senses of the people could judge of. If he had stated the fact that our Father in heaven loves 'all men, it would have

been just as true without the proof as with it; but this would have fallen short of his purpose; and might have been rejected as a mere matter of opinion. Jesus, therefore, addressed their senses with such evidence as their senses could judge of, but could not reject or gainsay. In our time, the opposers of this doctrine of Jesus have often asked, if it be a truth, why was it not long ago found out? Why has it not until lately been discovered and preached? Why have not the learned doctors of the church, in former ages, preached this doctrine? Kind hearers, if we may rely on the testimony of Jesus, and the corresponding testimony of our senses, this blessed doctrine has been preached as long as the sun has shone, and as long as rains have fallen on mankind; and these eloquent and faithful preachers will continue thus to testify, thus to preach, in direct and open opposition to all the partial systems of man's wisdom.

But we are not only furnished with outward senses to which the proofs of divine truth can be successfully addressed, and through which conviction can be sent home to the heart; but our heavenly Father has constituted us with those natural affections, which are capable of becoming the mediums of convictions equally strong as those we receive through our outward senses. This being the case, Jesus did not fail to call those natural affections into action, in support of his doctrine of the divine love.—Listen to his words: “What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give

good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask *him?*” Here the divine teacher makes an appeal to the kind affections of the parental heart, and summons them as evidences to prove his doctrine. Until fathers and mothers can hear their hungry children ask for bread, and feel satisfied by putting a stone into the stretched-out feeble hand; and hear them cry for but a piece of fish, and take delight in throwing a serpent to them, let them not represent our Father in heaven as destitute of compassion.

We are taught, by the several examples which have been presented to the hearer, that Jesus never proposed any thing for the people to believe, without presenting at the same time such evidences as are accommodated to the condition of the human understanding.

We shall now proceed to make use of the word *prove* in a way varying somewhat from the manner in which it has been used in this discourse, yet not in opposition, but by presenting another way or manner of proving all things. We prove the utility and suitableness of a thing by using it. In Jesus' parable of the supper, the excuse which one who had been bidden made for not coming, was, that he had bought five yoke of oxen, and must go and *prove* them. That is, he desired to put them to labour, that he might know whether they were suitable for the purpose for which he had bought them.—When David, with a pious enthusiasm and patriotic spirit, had accepted the challenge which the boasting Goliath offered the armies of Israel, Saul was appre-

hensive that the youth would certainly fall before the champion, and expostulated with him as follows: "Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." But when Saul found that David's determination was not to be changed, and that he could not daunt his courage, "he armed him with his own armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail, and David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not *proved* them." David had never had occasion to use such weapons, and he chose a sling, with which he was well acquainted. He had, in his boyhood, become familiar with the use of this deadly weapon, and felt confident that it would not fail him in the conflict in which he was to be engaged.— Many more instances of this use of the word *prove* might be cited, but these are sufficient. You will say, "We all know that this is a proper use of the word *prove*; but what is the speaker going to do with this use of the word?" He is about to call you to the experiment of putting doctrines to a faithful trial, by attempting to *prove* them by reducing them to practice.

The doctors of the church, by the wisdom of their schools, and by their deep researches, have, ages ago, furnished the Christian community with a creed, which teaches, that God from all eternity elected some of the human family, and ordained them to obtain eternal salvation by a Redeemer. The rest of the human race, this human creed con-

signs, by a decree of our Creator, to a state of unspeakable sufferings, which will never end, nor be diminished. In their wisdom, these doctors maintain, that the Creator saw fit to establish the forementioned decrees, for the purpose of making the most full and perfect display of his glorious perfections to intelligent beings, and of producing the greatest possible happiness in the universe.—It is not the object which we now have in view, to show that this doctrine is as repugnant to the Scriptures, as it is to reason and to the principles of moral nature. What we now desire is, that those who are parents in this assembly should prove this doctrine, by casting in their minds, whether they can go into their family circles, and practice this doctrine in their domestic government, and in the management of the concerns of their children. In the following manner you must proceed: Out of the goodly number of your beloved sons and daughters, you must choose, say one third, to be ever hereafter the objects of your kindest regards; and bring your minds to the determination to exclude all the rest of your children from your love and favour forever. When you have fully resolved on this method of procedure, and have, in your own minds, made the division of your family, you must then reveal your purposes to your children, and let them know your sovereign will. You must then proceed accordingly, and feed and clothe your elected favourites as their wants require. You must educate them in every branch of learning, which will contribute to their enjoyments in life. You must give them, at all times, a realizing sense of your tender regards for them, and keep them near to yourselves, that they may enjoy

your smiles and receive your fond caresses. On the other hand, you must not forget your duty to those forlorn children whom you have appointed unto wrath and indignation. You must deprive them of food and raiment; starve them, and expose them naked to the storms and to the cold. You must be careful that no comfort is afforded them from any quarter, and you must be equally vigilant in administering to them all the misery in your power. All this, too, must be done in the presence of the children on whom your favours are bestowed, that they may more fully and more perfectly enjoy their own state of happiness. If you should hear any one in your family circle suggest the query, why your favours are so disposed of, you must let it be known, that it is so ordered that you may thereby make the greatest possible display of the parental attributes of which you are possessed, and produce the greatest quantity of happiness in your family in your power!

Parents, you look with an earnestness which indicates surprise. Are you ready to say that the speaker seems disposed to tantalize your feelings? Far be it from him. But let me ask you the simple question, whether you can possibly thus practice in your families? You exclaim, "God forbid!" You will tell me that such conduct would outrage every feeling of your hearts, and would violate every principle of moral right of which the human mind is susceptible. Your humble servant is well aware of all this; and therefore invites you to the conclusion, that the whole scheme of doctrine which we have now put to the proof, by supposing it reduced to practice, is grossly erroneous; and is as dishonoura-

ble to our Father in heaven, as it is revolting to the feelings of the parental heart, or repugnant to moral principles.

It is likely that many of this assembly may be disposed to say, "The doctrine which the speaker has laboured to put to the test, by supposing it reduced to practice, is now generally repudiated by the clergy of the church; and a more reasonable, a more scriptural, and a more liberal doctrine is now generally held forth by them." If this be in fact the case, we shall do well to give this improved system of divinity a careful examination; and after having a clear understanding of its principles, proceed to reduce it to practice.

The modern theory, which is called by the agreeable name of *liberal Christianity*, teaches, that with our Creator there is no partiality; that he has constituted man a moral agent, and has set life and death before him; has made ample provisions by which the whole human race may obtain his favour, and enjoy him forever, by a right use of our moral powers; that we are in this world probationers for eternity, and that our final condition hereafter depends on the improvements we make in this mortal state; that God has appointed a day of judgment in the future world, where all mankind will be impartially judged according to their works in this, and forever rewarded or punished, accordingly as their characters shall have been formed in this mortal life.—This theory does not profess to make the happiness of heaven hereafter any better than does the other theory; nor does it make the torments of the unhappy wicked, in the world to come, any

more tolerable. In respect, then, to man's eternal state, it certainly is no better. All the improvement, then, to which it can lay any claim, is to be found in the conditions on which depends our future and eternal doom. As these conditions rest with us as moral agents, it is contended that divine, impartial justice will forever shine, both in the final justification of the righteous, and in the endless condemnation of the wicked. After the day of judgment, this theory teaches, that the unhappy, the condemned, will never, to all eternity, enjoy another favour from our Creator, but will experience unspeakable misery forever.

Respected friends, we do not propose calling your attention to an investigation of this doctrine, in order to disprove it by showing that it is unscriptural; but it is consistent with the plan of this discourse, to call on the hearers to put it to the same test, to which the former has been brought. Parents are again called on to take this modern theory of divinity as a model, according to which their family economy is to be fashioned. You who are parents, will therefore proceed as follows: Go to your children, and inform them, that you love them all with an impartial love; that you have ordained to them a season of probation; that at the expiration of ten years, you shall call them to give an account of their conduct; that you shall keep a true and an exact account of all their doings, during the season of their probation, which, at the appointed day of judgment, shall decide their future destiny. Give them to understand, that those whose conduct shall be found at the judgment to have been according to your precepts, shall then receive your cordial approbation,

and that they shall inherit all your estates, and enjoy your favour ever after; but those whose deeds shall be found at the judgment to have been faulty, and to have come short of your requirements, will then receive your disapprobation, shall be discarded and disinherited, and shall never receive the least favour from you. Give them moreover to understand, that those whose good conduct shall obtain your approbation, and who shall enjoy your favour, shall have the privilege of seeing their brethren and sisters, whose faults shall exclude them from your grace, continually in want and misery!

Parents, your countenances indicate dissatisfaction. Have you any objections to an economy of this character? What fault have you to find with this plan of family government? I am apprehensive that the following objections have already arisen in your minds:

First. This scheme would deprive you of that constant and daily discipline, which you know is indispensable in the good government of your children. If your children do those things to-day which they ought not to do, or if they omit their duty to-day, they need an immediate attention. Suitable and needed reproof, or possibly some gentle chastisement, might be attended with reformation. Why, then, should not the delinquent be called to an account immediately? By it obedience might be obtained, and future good conduct secured. And in case of obedience, why should your approbation be withheld? It would encourage your child to persevere in well-doing, and be the means of preventing a falling away, or a departure from duty. You all know that it is necessary that rewards and chastise-

ments should be constantly and daily administered, in order to encourage obedience and to prevent wrong doing. This ten years' probation is evidently contrary to a proper family government; and you find you cannot adopt it. Suppose the preceptor of a school should inform his pupils, that his determination was to reward the obedient, and to punish the disobedient, but that he should do neither until his school should be ended. Would this be the most prudent method to govern scholars? You are satisfied of the inutility of such an economy.

Secondly. You would object to the proposed plan of family government, because you remember that you were once children yourselves. And you have not forgotten that you sometimes did those things which your kind parents commanded you not to do; and sometimes you neglected to do as they bid you. And although you often felt very sorry, and were grieved that you had disobeyed, and often formed resolutions that you would not again commit such faults, yet you remember that temptations often overcame your good resolutions, and you had to experience the same wounds again. In view, therefore, of your own experience, and your knowledge of the infirmities of childhood and youth, you would not dare to suspend the future favours you have in store for the children you love, on conditions which you have too many reasons to apprehend might fail. "Ten years' probation! The day of trial is near! Should I find at that day, that disobedience has marked the path of some of my beloved children, as it did my own path in my childhood, can I withdraw all my affections from such children? Can I doom them to perpetual sufferings? Must they never

again behold a parent's smile? God forbid!" This is no unnatural soliloquy.

Thirdly. You object to the proposed plan of governing your family, because of the promise it calls on you to make to those children who might be so fortunate as to obtain your approbation. To them you must promise, that they shall have and enjoy the privilege of seeing those whom you shall disinherit, forever in want and misery. This, you say, is diabolical. "Can I, who love all my children, and desire them to love each other, outrage my own feelings, and theirs too, by making such a promise? God forbid!"—Parents, you have come to a right conclusion. You have *proved* this scheme of doctrine false. You cannot reduce its principles to practice.

People may go to the house of devotion; they may hear learned ministers hold forth such doctrines as we have put to the test; they may admire the beautiful oratory, and the flowery rhetoric, in which such sentiments are dressed up; but they must leave it all behind them when they go home with their beloved families. They can never practice the domestic virtues and duties on those principles of doctrine.

Kind hearers, the doctrine of Jesus is a practicable doctrine; and we can never do our duties in our families unless we live and conduct according to it. What this doctrine is, we have seen in this discourse; and it alters nothing by whatever name we call it; its nature and its requirements are LOVE. It requires us to love our enemies, by teaching us that our Father in heaven loves the just and the unjust.

The examples which we have noticed in the conduct of Jesus toward unbelievers, teach us how to treat them ourselves, and what to expect from our Father in heaven for them. If this doctrine is good, if you can prove it so by reducing it to practice in your families, and in every relation to mankind in which you live; if it fills you with hope, with joy, with comfort and peace, *hold it fast*, as our text directs. Prize it above all things on earth; part with every thing here below, rather than with this. While we live, let us live in this blessed doctrine; and when we die, may we enjoy its glorious hope.

SERMON III.

*Delivered in the Lombard street Church, Wednesday evening,
November 5, 1834.*

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.”—2 COR. v. 10.

Notice having been given from this desk, on a previous occasion, that this passage of scripture would be attended to this evening, no doubt is entertained by the speaker, that many of you are present for the express purpose of ascertaining how we explain it, and how it can be understood consistently with the doctrine we profess and teach. It is therefore due to the expectations of the congregation, that we attend to this work in a way, if possible, to give satisfaction to every hearer; and we ought either to satisfy you, that the passage does not, in its legitimate use, make against the doctrine we profess; or by our investigations make the discovery, that it does absolutely stand opposed to our views.

Let it be distinctly understood, that our interest is precisely the same. However dissimilar our ideas may be, in relation to the text, we are all equally interested in the truth of it. Should we succeed in making any one believe that it belongs to a subject to which it does not belong, we shall do as much in-

justice to ourselves as to those whom we delude. So that we have no more interest in deceiving any one, than we should have in being deceived ourselves.

It is well known that the passage before us has been made use of by the opposers of what is called Universalism, as a direct proof against that doctrine; and we do not hesitate to accord to those opposers the credit of being honest and sincere. They really believe that this single text, without the aid of any other, is amply sufficient to disprove our doctrine, and to establish theirs. We, however, entertain a widely different opinion—so different, indeed, that were we desired to select a special passage in proof of our views of judgment, we certainly should refer to the text before us. This may appear very strange, and yet it is a solemn fact. Your humble servant knows of no passage which stands more directly opposed to the popular doctrine of the day of judgment in a future world, than the text just read for consideration. We wish to be distinctly understood; we believe that divine revelation teaches us, that in *this* world God judges man, and renders unto him according to his works. Our opposers deny this doctrine, and contend, that the text refers to a day of judgment, not in the present world, but in a future state. They hold that the outward universe will be dissolved before this judgment takes place; and they assert that the whole Adamic family, from the first created to the last born of the race, will at one time be assembled before the judgment seat of Christ in eternity, and there be judged according to the tenor of the text.

I presume that you will bear me record, that I have fairly stated the views of our opposers. I do

not believe there is a doctor of divinity, or a clergyman of any grade, who stands in opposition to the doctrine we profess, who will say that I have not fairly represented his opinions on this subject. I have heard these views preached over and over again, by the clergy of the church; and they uniformly contend, that the judgment to which we have referred, is not in *this* world, but in the world to come.

Having made these plain statements, I invite the attention of my hearers to what may have the appearance of bearing hard upon our opponents; and yet nothing is more foreign from our intention, than to cause them to think that we feel unkindly towards them. Uncharitable feelings are totally inconsistent with the spirit of our doctrine. We look upon our opposers as our brethren. They are children of our heavenly Father; we believe they are heirs of eternal life, equally with ourselves; that they are embraced in the blessed covenant which Christ sealed with his blood; and that they are entitled to all the blessings of the Gospel of heaven; and we have no interest in conflicting with their opinions, aside from their own good. We could enjoy our sentiments in comfort, and avoid reproach, were we to conceal our views—but our regard for the happiness of mankind, will not allow us to hold our peace. We believe that false doctrines take away the consolations which men ought to enjoy as the disciples of Jesus Christ. We believe that the effect of those doctrines has been, to rob human society of the enjoyment which would have resulted from correct views of the gospel of heaven. Benevolent principles prompt us to speak; and a desire

to benefit our opposers, induces us to wrestle with them, to meet them on every question, and if possible, to enlighten their understandings, that they may see, and know, and rejoice in the truth.—The propriety and utility of communicating the truth to mankind, will be acknowledged by every candid person present. Not one of you will contend, that our doctrine should not be preached, if it be true. And yet your humble servant has been told by clergymen, that even if they believed our doctrine, they would not preach it, they would not acknowledge it! And I do not know but they do believe it! How am I to know that they do *not*? And even should they *deny* that they believe it, what confidence can I repose in their assertions, after they have informed me, that even if they believed in Universalism, they would not acknowledge it?—But I must proceed to make the statement which, as I before remarked, may appear to bear rather hard upon our opposers.

My hearers, there is not a single clergyman, or doctor of divinity of the old school, who believes what the text says about the day of judgment, as they apply it. You will not misunderstand me:—they *think* they believe it, but they do not know what the text says. I repeat it—they do not believe the text, if applied to a day of judgment in the future state. “Do not believe the text!” says the hearer: “how will you make that appear?” I answer thus: Do they believe that every individual of our race will be brought to the judgment seat of Christ in eternity, and there receive according to that he hath done, whether good or bad? They say they do—but I say they do not. They believe that, at the

day of judgment, some will receive according to what they have done that is *good*, and *not* according to what they have done that is *bad*; and that others will receive according to what they have done that is *bad*, and not according to what they have done that is *good*. But the text speaks an entirely different language.

Allow me to propose the following question: Do the popular clergy believe that, at the day of judgment, St. Paul will be called up, and there receive for all the abominable deeds he committed while he was an enemy to Christ and the church? No—they never pretended to believe any such thing. They do not pretend that *any* man who, in the day of judgment, is to receive any reward for his *good* deeds, will receive any punishment for his *bad* deeds. But what says the text: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, WHETHER IT BE GOOD OR BAD." "Well," says the hearer, "that places the subject in a different light; because the clergy do not pretend that any one, at the day of judgment, is to receive good for the good he has done, and evil for the evil he has done. They do not pretend, that those who will receive a recompense for good deeds, will also be punished for their bad deeds. But the *text* says, *every one* shall receive according to that he hath done, *whether* it be *good* or *bad*." My hearers, our opposers have totally overlooked the letter of the text, and they have altogether misunderstood its spirit.

Again. Did you ever hear a doctor of divinity declare, that St. Peter, who denied his Lord, and

cursed and swore that he knew not the man, will, at the day of judgment, receive retribution for his abominable conduct? No, you never did. And yet, if the text be properly applied to eternity, Paul will there be punished for all the persecutions in which he ever was engaged; and Peter will there be punished for denying his Lord; because, according to the text, *every one* is to receive according to his deeds, whether they be good or bad. Now, if our opposers be correct, the man who has done any bad deeds, must receive retribution therefor in eternity; and if the same man has done any good deeds, he must receive a reward therefor in eternity. But you never heard the clergy preach in this manner. We should do them injustice were we to affirm that they thus believe. Nevertheless, if the text applies to eternity, it involves the very points which none of our opposers ever pretended to believe! They believe, on the contrary, that a person may live a wicked life; he may continue to sin until his head is white with age—if he repents before he dies, he is entitled to immortal glory, and will never be punished in eternity for a single sin that he ever committed! If this be so, and if the text applies to the future state, how can it be true, that every one is to receive according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad?

Let us inquire again. You have heard much of the piety of David. But David was guilty of crimes sufficiently black to stamp the character of any man with everlasting infamy. A more abominable and wicked act than one of his, is not on record. Considering the nature of the offence, and the small circle in which it operated, it had every feature which

could make it an abomination of the deepest dye. And yet our clergy never pretend that David will ever receive any retribution for this wickedness. Poor Uriah might be sent to hell by his means, and be eternally kept there; but David, who killed him, is not to be punished at all! Yet the text declares, that *every one* must receive according to his deeds, whether they be good or bad. David unquestionably did many good things before he committed the crime referred to, and afterward; and I am willing to grant, that were he judged according to the text, as applied by others, he would receive a reasonable reward for his *good* deeds, but he would also have to receive much for his *evil* deeds.

I desire you duly to weigh this matter, and you will allow me to ask, whether I have omitted any arguments necessary for the support of my position—namely, that the clergy who make use of this text to support their own doctrine, do not believe it, according to their own application? They do not seem to realize the full import of the declaration, that *every one* must receive according to that he hath done, *whether* it be *good* or *bad*. And you will be careful to notice, that the text does not say, every one must receive according to his *pretensions* or *professions* in the world; but the passage has special reference to *works*. The language is, “according to that he hath DONE, whether good or bad.”

If I am not deceived by the intelligence that appears in the countenances of my hearers, you are satisfied on this subject; and you are ready to allow, that our opposers have never held up the doctrine

of the text, according either to its letter or spirit, so as to agree with their application.

What must your speaker attend to next? You answer, "Give us a clear understanding of the text." This I will endeavour to do. And I wish to have it understood, as I before remarked, that we believe God judges men in *this* world, according to their deeds; and that he rewards and punishes them in this world, accordingly as their deeds are good or evil. You now have the proposition before you, and if I fail to make it plain, I shall be much disappointed in my expectations.

I will notice several passages of Scripture which have a bearing on the subject. Deut. xxxii. 4: "He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." This passage declares, that *all God's ways are judgment*. His ways are certainly not confined to another state of existence, and excluded from this. God has *some* government here; he has *some* rule over the world he has made. And if "ALL his ways are judgment," does he not, in his providence, judge men in this world? His ways are *here*, and here his judgments are displayed.

Let us read again. Psalm lviii. 11: "Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth." David does not say, he is a God that judgeth *in eternity*. How did the author of this Psalm know that God judges in the earth? He knew that judgments were passed upon men who were guilty of offences; and even David was visited by God's appointed minister, and the nature of his crime was portrayed to him, under

cover of a supposed case. Nathan the prophet said unto him, "thou art the man." And David felt the power and force of the prophet's charge. And Nathan told him of the judgments that God would send upon him, and those judgments did come upon him a short time afterwards. "He is a God that judgeth in the earth." If the doctrine be true, that God judges men only in another world, why are we told that "he is a God who judgeth *in the earth?*"

Again. Psalm lxxvii. 4: "O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt *judge* the people righteously, and *govern* the nations upon earth." Here is a *government* and *judgment upon earth*.—Psalm xcvi. 11—13: "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord; for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth."—Jeremiah ix. 24: "I am the Lord, which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth."

He judgeth in the earth. Let us pause and reflect a moment. Did not the Almighty give to the house of Israel a law by Moses? "Yes." Did he not establish the administration of justice under that dispensation of laws? "Yes." Did he not by Moses inform the people what would befall them, if they transgressed his precepts? "Yes." Did he not state the blessings with which he would reward them for their obedience? "Yes." Now take the precepts of the law, and take the history of the Jews, and read them; and you will find that one

perfectly answers to the other. There is not a judgment which Heaven proposed for the wickedness of the people, that did not literally belong to this state of existence: and no doctor of divinity will risk his reputation, and affirm that the judgments of God, announced under the law of Moses, applied to the state of man hereafter. You may read them all, and you will find that they all apply to the present state of existence. The Israelites were to be blessed as a nation, if they were obedient. And if they were disobedient, they were to be dispersed as a nation; be made subjects of thirst, famine, and disease; and be compelled to serve their enemies in their own land. And this is the utmost stretch of adjudication for their iniquities, proposed in the laws of Moses. Is not this a fact? and do you not marvel, that our doctors of divinity have preached that God does *not* judge and reward men in *this* world according to their works?

The question arises—If, under the law dispensation, the Jews were judged in this state of existence, is it not highly probable, that there is, under the gospel dispensation, a government and discipline by which men are judged according to their works in the present world? St. Paul had this view of the subject. Hebrews ii. 1—3: “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience *received* a just recompense of reward; how shall *we* escape, if *we* neglect so great salvation.” Mark the words of the apostle—he speaks in the past tense. And this authority forever decides the

question at issue—because it assumes the fact, that God *did* judge the people according to the law, and that transgression, under the law, *did* receive a just recompense of reward.

Let us now turn to the gospel. Jesus came with a new covenant and dispensation. He came with the kingdom of heaven, the gospel of peace.—I need not occupy your time in endeavouring to establish a position about which there is no dispute; that is, that the kingdom of heaven, spoken of in the New Testament, signifies the kingdom of the gospel dispensation among men on earth. The Jews were charged with *shutting up* this kingdom—but they had no power to shut up the kingdom of immortal glory.

I will now proceed to show, that in this government of Jesus, he has a judgment seat, a tribunal; and that, in the gospel dispensation, men are judged according to their works, in this state of existence, without reference to any judgment in the world to come.

We will read a few of the prophecies concerning the Messiah. Isaiah xlii. 1—4: “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set *judgment in the earth*: and the isles shall wait for his law.” Isaiah, beholding the glory of the gospel dispensation, saw that the Messiah would put the law covenant away, and establish his own laws, and his own judgments among men, and that mankind would be amenable to *him*—for he was to “set judgment in

the earth.”—Hearken to the language of Jesus himself. John v. 22, 27: “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son.... And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.” John ix. 39: “For judgment I am come into this world.” Now, why did Jesus come into *this* world for judgment, if he was not to judge men in this world? Inasmuch as he came to set judgment in the earth, to establish a kingdom and government among men, it is plain that here, *in this world*, his judgment seat is to be found. He could not have a *government* or *kingdom* here, without having a *judgment seat* here.—He came into *this* world for judgment, and God gave him authority to *execute* judgment. Now listen to the following prophecy. Jeremiah xxiii. 5: “Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall *execute judgment and justice in the earth.*”

It is very remarkable, that the clergy have so pertinaciously denied the doctrine of judgment in the earth, when the Bible makes the subject so perfectly plain. There is not, in all the Scriptures, a single word said about a judgment in the future state. Look at the text under consideration. Does the Apostle intimate, that we must appear before the judgment seat of Christ *in eternity*? If this was his meaning, why did he not express it? But he had no such idea in his mind; and no such doctrine is taught, either in the Old Testament or the New. And if we receive that doctrine, we must receive it on the testimony of men.

But now, my hearers, comes a subject in which we are all deeply interested; for it is a truth, that “we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.” Allow me to remark, that the translators have supplied several words in the text, which somewhat change the reading, but the meaning is not essentially varied. Without the supplied words, which are printed in *italic*, the text reads thus: “that every one may receive the things in body, according to that he hath done.” The translators thought they must supply a few words, in order to sustain their views in relation to judgments. And I would have the congregation remember, that although the translators of the Bible believed in the doctrine of endless punishment, they have not made a translation from which that doctrine can be proved! This is one of the most remarkable things I have ever thought of,—that with all their twists and turns, those translators were not able to make a text that will prove the doctrine of endless misery!

“We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.” The apostle is here speaking of himself, and of his brethren—of the Christian commonwealth, and not of heathens—of believers, and not of men who never heard of Christ. Persons who have not heard of Christ, are not under his law. Our Saviour said to his disciples, in reference to the Jews, “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.” If Christ had not openly proclaimed his doctrine and precepts, the people could not have been

amenable to his law, nor justly answerable at his bar. And to set up an *ex post facto* law, to judge men for actions performed before the law was established, is out of the question. Our text applies to the *Christian commonwealth*; for there Christ had set up his kingdom, established his government, and published his law: there it is that our Saviour erected his judgment seat; and according to his doctrine and precepts men must now be judged.

What is meant by the judgment seat of Christ?— You will pardon me for introducing a very familiar illustration: Your fashions and customs in the city of Philadelphia, constitute a judgment seat. I mean by this, that whatever is customary among you, constitutes a judgment seat. In this respect, people feel as if they were amenable to the fashions and customs of the places in which they reside. Were a citizen of Paris to come among you, without understanding your customs, he would proceed very oddly; and he would not be held accountable at the judgment seat referred to, because he would not know what your customs are; and you could tolerate his deviations, because he was brought up in different customs. But you would not tolerate a similar deviation in one of your own citizens. We are held amenable to *public opinion*: this constitutes the law of social life; and this law constitutes the judgment seat. The ladies of this city, for instance, feel under an obligation to conform to the customs and fashions of the circles in which they move, and they govern themselves accordingly.— You must not suppose that I am disposed to trifle,

by introducing this light matter. I introduce it, to make way for a more striking illustration.

You are sensible, as politicians—(for all republicans are politicians,) that you feel a deep interest in, and have a high estimation for, a republican form of government. We look back with enthusiastic emotion, and reflect upon the price it cost us; and we forget not the hardships that our forefathers endured in achieving our liberty. Now, I ask, does this government exist without a judgment seat? I do not particularly refer to the judicial statutes—but to the tone of public feeling and sentiment. Would any public politician dare to speak in favour of a monarchy, or of aristocracy? No; because he is amenable to public sentiment; and he knows that he would be brought before the bar of public opinion, and that, at that judgment seat, he would be condemned.

In the light of the foregoing illustrations, I desire the hearer to understand distinctly, that no one can become acquainted with Christianity, without being amenable to the law of Christ, which is written in the heart; and that the law of Christ constitutes his judgment seat.

The question now arises—What is the law of Christ? In answering this question, we shall find his judgment seat. The law of Christ is, that we shall love our enemies, and pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us. This is the law to which our lawgiver was himself obedient. He gave himself, the just for the unjust, that he might bring them to God. The law of Christ requires every Christian to exert all his powers for the benefit of his fellow men. It teaches him, that he must

not hate, either his neighbour or his enemy; but love them both.—Every precept that Jesus enjoined, was with *him* a principle of action. Hearken to the benign precept which fell from his lips: “Whatever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” And there is such a sense of this religious obligation in the minds of all Christians, that they are ashamed, if they are detected in acting contrary to this law.

Paul had passed through the ordeal, represented by the judgment seat. He was brought before the judgment seat of Christ. Behold him on his way to Damascus, with authority to destroy the disciples of our Lord. He was met by our Saviour. No sheriff was sent to arrest him. The simple question was put, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?”—How kindly was this question asked! and yet it brought the persecutor to the judgment seat of Christ! He himself says: “I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” He was apprehended, and tried, and condemned, and slain, by the simple question of the Master! “*Why* persecutest thou me?” Can a reason be given for this? Yes: he felt the force and power of divine truth that accompanied the question; and he could not resist it. “Who art thou, Lord?” “I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.” A very mild way of proceeding with a judgment; but it had the desired effect. “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” And Paul says, in the verse following our text, “Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we *ARE made manifest unto God*; and I trust also are made *manifest in your consciences.*” And it may be pro-

per to remark, that the original word here translated *manifest*, is rendered *appear*, in the text. And every one, who is brought to the light and knowledge of the gospel, must appear, or be made manifest, at the judgment seat of Christ, in the same way.

I will endeavour more fully to illustrate my meaning, by referring to a few particulars.—Our blessed Saviour declared, that those who loved father or mother, wife or children, houses or lands, more than him, were not worthy of him. Christians are obliged to try themselves by this rule. Do you love any thing more than you love Christ? If you do, you are not worthy of him, and you stand condemned before his judgment seat. To love those around us, is commendable; but nothing should be allowed to alienate our affections from our Redeemer. We are required to become his disciples, to espouse his cause, and to follow him through evil report, and through good—and yet there are thousands who do not obey these requirements, although they acknowledge them to be reasonable and just. The vain excuses of men for neglecting the invitation of the Saviour, are set forth in the parable of the supper. One said, “I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.” Another said, “I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.” A third said, “I have married a wife, and therefore *cannot* come.” He did not even pray to be excused.—Now, whoever has heard the invitations of our Lord, and understands the nature, and acknowledges the justice of his requirements, and yet fails to comply with them, stands condemned

before the judgment seat of Christ. In this manner, and at this judgment seat, the professions of men are tested. They who love *any thing* more than they love Christ, are not worthy of him.

Again. Our Saviour said, "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." When the Jews brought the woman who had been taken in adultery, and desired to know of Jesus what his judgment concerning her was, our blessed Lord used the following language: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." This was the judgment seat of Christ. And the accusers felt the power and force of our Master's decision. "Being convicted by their own conscience," by their own sense of the justice of his judgment, "they went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last." In this way, and at this bar, the judgment of our Lord is pronounced. He who ventures to bring accusations against his fellow men, must beware lest he fall into condemnation himself. "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do even so to them." This is the law of Christ—and this law constitutes his judgment seat.

Again. *Doctrines* must be tested by bringing them to the judgment seat of Christ. Our Saviour said, "What man is there of you, whom, if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask *him?*" Look at the judgment seat formed by this testimony:—God is much better to mankind than parents are to their children. Can any doctrine be

true that stands opposed to this statement? No. Can any doctrine be true which supposes that God either hates or will ever eternally torment any of his creatures? No. Is there a parent in the wide world, who could be brought to such a state of enmity against his offspring, as to throw them into eternal flames? God forbid! This, then, is the judgment seat before which the doctrines of men must appear. And every doctrine that does not square with the laws and the precepts of Christ, must and will come to nought. And, thanks be to God! the light of the gospel is progressing; and the human intellect is becoming enlightened; and men are becoming more and more philanthropic; and the doctrines which represent God as the enemy of his creatures, are consequently fast sinking into oblivion. They have been tried at the judgment seat of Christ; and they have been condemned.

My hearers, let us submit every thing to the judgment seat of Jesus. Let us ever stand before his bar. Let our professions, our feelings, our conduct, our doctrines, be tried by his law. Let every one propose the questions to his own heart, Are my feelings and motives consistent with the directions of the Saviour? Do I love and pray for my enemies? Am I willing to suffer, the just for the unjust?

My hearers, the principles of the Christian religion, properly understood and faithfully practised, are life, and peace, and joy. They afford the purest and most enduring happiness and comfort. But let us remember, that if we would realize those enjoyments, we must carefully hearken to the voice of the wisdom from above. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

SERMON IV.

*Delivered in the Lombard Street Church, Sunday Morning,
November 9, 1834.*

THE CRAFT AND CRIME OF ABSALOM.

“So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.”—2 SAM. xv. 6.

The language of the text embraces a subject which indicates great ingratitude in a son toward his father. It also indicates much subtlety in prosecuting an ungrateful and wicked design. It furnishes much admonition that we ought carefully to regard, to render us cautious how we are deceived by the false and artful pretensions of our fellow creatures.

Absalom, son of David, had, in former times, caused his father much trouble and distress. He had imbrued his hands in the blood of a brother—on account of which offence he was obliged to flee his country. He journeyed to Geshur, in Syria, where he abode, until his father, having become pacified toward him, was induced to recal him. The efforts of Joab, and the counsels of a wise woman of Tekoah, prompted David to this measure. Absalom returned to Jerusalem; but instead of becoming a dutiful son, instead of being grateful for past favours and present privileges, he undertook to supplant his father in the affections of the people, in order that he might eventually usurp the throne.

In the accomplishment of his object, he was even willing to drive the venerable king from his beloved Jerusalem, and cause him to become a fugitive and a stranger in a strange land.

The chapter in which the text is found, mentions the means that Absalom adopted to supplant his father in the affections of the people. He placed himself "beside the way of the gate, and when any man who had a controversy came to the king for judgment," Absalom was sure to meet him first, and make inquiry as to whence he came, and what was the nature of his controversy. And then he would say unto him, "See, thy matters are good and right—but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee"—thus intimating that David was inattentive to the interests of the people. And Absalom moreover would say, "O that *I* were made judge in the land, that every man who hath any suit or cause might come unto *me*, and *I* would do him justice"—thus artfully intimating, that *he* was the man who should be judge in the land—because *he* would see that justice was done to the people. By these means, he transferred to himself all the confidence previously reposed in the integrity of the king. But the work was not yet completed. Absalom desired the people to believe that he sincerely loved them—"and when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel." His professions of love were designed to impress them with the conviction, that were *he* made judge in the land, he would not only see that

justice was done, but he would be the loving friend of the people!

Having thus stolen the hearts of the men of Israel—for *theft* it certainly was—and having carefully matured all his wicked designs, Absalom went to his father, and said, "I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I vowed unto the Lord, in Hebron. For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the Lord shall bring me again to Jerusalem, then I will serve the Lord." This was the form in which Absalom laid his subject before the king. David was a pious man, and was willing that his son should go to Hebron to pay his vow to the Most High. And he said, "Go in peace." And Absalom went—but not to worship. He went to raise the standard of rebellion against his father! The trumpet, when first it sounded, proclaimed that Absalom reigned as king in Hebron! "And there came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom." David looked around him, and his eye rested upon a few veteran soldiers, who were at his command. And he said, "Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword." This language of venerable David is very touching—it is almost enough to melt a heart of stone! He had nourished and brought up a favourite child—and that child had rebelled against him! Absalom stood in hostile attitude toward the lawful king of Israel. Ahithophel, David's counsellor, a man of much wisdom and experience, was also turned against him. This was another calamity.

David prayed that the counsel of Ahithophel might come to nought; and then, in company with his followers, he fled from the city, and crossed over Jordan.

By this time, Absalom had obtained possession of Jerusalem, and had collected great numbers of the men of Israel, whose hearts he had stolen, to fight against the king. Meanwhile David's army mightily increased. The commanders thereof were specially ordered to "deal gently with the young man, even with Absalom." A battle ensued in the wood of Ephraim; and the rebellion that originated in the fascinating words and kisses of Absalom, ended in a storm of war. Twenty thousand of the men of Israel were destroyed; Absalom lost his life; and David was restored to his authority in the land, though sorely distressed because of the rebellion and death of his son.

I have not been very minute in attending to the history of our subject; and as you are supposed to be familiar therewith, it is not necessary to be more particular. I have given you enough of the general outline, to show how necessary it is to guard against imposition from the foolish and intriguing pretensions of those who profess to love us.—It is really astonishing how the men of Israel could trust a man whose professions of regard and attachment were so entirely hypocritical. But people love to be flattered; and flattery has such an effect on the mind, as frequently to draw it away from the principles of reason and justice. If the men of Israel had paused a moment to reason on the subject, they surely would not have been so cruelly deceived by the

hypocrisy and wickedness of Absalom. He pretended that he loved them, and he adopted artful measures to convince them that he was really their friend; yet it did not once occur to the people, that Absalom was plotting the destruction of a kind, and forgiving, and affectionate father! You clearly discover wherein they were deceived—and you also discover the cause of the deception. They were flattered into blindness. They were so completely blinded by the fascinating words and kisses of Absalom, that they could not see him in his true character. They deemed him their loving friend, and they threw themselves into his arms, and thought themselves safer than they could possibly have been in the arms of their aged and experienced king.

The text declares, that “Absalom *stole* the hearts of the men of Israel.” It was *theft*. This supposes that the hearts of the men of Israel had been in the possession, and were the rightful property, of David their king.

Let us now inquire, what Absalom had ever done for his country, to signalize either his wisdom, valour, or patriotism. When this question is proposed, we find no answer that is favourable to Absalom. There is no evidence that he ever exhibited the least patriotism, or that he ever did any thing for the benefit of his country. But such was not the case with his father. The hearts of the men of Israel clave to David, because of his wisdom, valour, and patriotism. You remember the occasion on which Saul and his men of war, were confronted by the Philistine host, on the eve of a great battle. That boasting champion, Goliath, had challenged any man in Saul's army, to decide the battle in single com-

bat. But who was prepared to go up against this man of war? The face of the mightiest gathered paleness before him! At this juncture, David, who was but a youth, arrived with presents to his brethren. He heard the boast of the giant—he heard him defy the armies of the living God—he saw that no one seemed disposed to meet the foe—he felt that Israel was disgraced—he could not endure it—his heart burned within him, and he said to Saul, “Let no man’s heart fail; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.” And he met him; and with his sling and a smooth stone he destroyed him; and he cut off Goliath’s head, and took his sword, and brought both to the king at the head of the army. Thus David wrought deliverance in Israel. And when he bore the trophies of victory, “the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music. And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.” And thus David gained the affections of the people, and their hearts were never surrendered to any other, until they were stolen by Absalom. They were stolen by craft, and directed to crime—and the whole enterprize ended in sorrow, defeat, and death!

My hearers, our subject furnishes a salutary caution. We should not hastily accredit any man’s professions of patriotism, nor hastily believe his declarations of ardent love to his country, if there be no corresponding indication in his conduct. Do not allow yourselves to be led astray. There are thou-

sands of men who have their eyes on entirely selfish ends, while they talk about their desire to be of use to their fellow-citizens and to their country. I have no reference whatever to any particular party in politics. I am speaking of the depravity of mankind. Every man's honesty and patriotism must be determined by his actions, and not by his words. "The tree is known by its fruit." Many men have said, in effect, "O that *I* were made judge in the land, that every man who hath any suit or cause, might come unto me, and *I* would do him justice,"—when, at the same time, self-elevation was his great object. Others have said, "If we can only get that man into authority, it will be the best thing that can happen for the interests of the country"—while the fact has been, that those very persons were seeking office and self-aggrandizement, through the influence of the individual whose elevation they so strongly urged!

I have another subject in view, and I desire your company in the investigation of it. It has a bearing on an enterprize which is carried on by another class of people. But here I find a difficulty: I know not how to unfold the subject, because I do not wish to give offence to any one; and I would carefully avoid impugning the motives of those of whom I shall speak. But, my friendly hearers, I am impelled by a sense of duty, and by my profession, to bring against a certain class of community, a charge which is very justly represented in the text. Says the hearer, "Who does he intend to accuse? Some very low creatures, I suppose—some very impious persons." My friends, I should be pleased had I

no more disagreeable task before me. But I have the distressing duty to perform, of informing you, that I have the Christian clergy in view,—the doctors of divinity, who profess to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. “Surely,” says the hearer, “surely the speaker does not intend to bring the charge against *them!*” It is more painful to me to make the charge, than it is to you to hear it. But the popular clergy have committed a less excusable theft than Absalom committed. “Wherein?” They have stolen the hearts of the people, not from an earthly monarch, as Absalom did, but from our Father in heaven! The people believe what they have been told, and they love the clergy better than they do the Almighty, and have more confidence in them! “Is that a fact?” says the hearer. Yes, it is. Do not the clergy inform you that the Lord is full of wrath toward poor sinners, and that you are in awful danger of endless destruction from the drawn sword of divine vengeance! “Yes.” And how is it with themselves? Are they willing to yield you up to such destruction? They are not. They inform you, that they have so much regard for your best interests, that they wish to place you in such a situation as will secure you from the eternal vengeance of your Creator! They have so strong an affection for you, that they are willing to converse with you day and night, and to spend and be spent in the labour of love, if they can but save one poor soul from the vengeance of offended heaven! And the people believe them. They say, “How solemnly that man spoke of his love for us! he must be a very good man.” People will listen to such fascinating language, and they will give up their hearts

to the ministers,—but God thereby loses the affections of the children he has formed!

There is one particular in which our clergy have improved on the example of Absalom. “Absalom stole the hearts of the *men* of Israel.” And herein his sagacity failed. He should have attempted to steal the hearts of the *women* of Israel; and in the opinion of your humble servant, if he had succeeded in so doing, he would have succeeded in his rebellion.

I remarked, that our clergy have improved on Absalom's example. You will generally find, that they take the opportunity to visit your houses, when the father, husband, or brother, is engaged in his business. They sit down with the wife or daughter, as the case may be, and begin the conversation by saying, “I feel concerned for your welfare; I fear there is a dreadful doom coming upon you. You know that God is the enemy of sinners, and that hell is the certain portion of every unconverted soul. I come out of pure love,—shall I pray with you?” “Why, yes.” He kneels down, and prays fervently. He then tells the inmates of the house how ardently his heart longs for their salvation—and how sincerely he desires to save them from the vengeance of Almighty God! They look upon his visage, and behold nothing but the most ardent affection. “It would be wicked,” say they, “to refuse the message of such a loving friend!” So they give their hearts to the minister, and think they are doing right!

Is not this stealing the hearts of the people from the Father of the spirits of all flesh? Why cannot mankind perceive, that God would not send such

affectionate messengers, if what they say be true? If he be really so wrathful toward mankind, would he send such loving ministers? If God were our enemy, he would send ministers of wrath and indignation.—The clergy to whom I have referred, profess to come in the name of God—and yet their object seems to be to steal the hearts of women and children from their Creator! I do not intend to impugn their motives. They may themselves be deceived, and think that they love the people better than the people are loved by the Almighty. If they are *not* thus deceived, they are guilty of the rankest hypocrisy—of which, however, I do not accuse them. I believe they are themselves deceived. When they were rocked in their cradles, the same deception prevailed around them. They were sent to colleges and theological seminaries, in which the doctrine they preach was taught. It has been carefully instilled into their minds—and they have been deceived thereby. It is a most terrible delusion. And the doctrine which gives existence to it, and sanctions it, and enables the preachers of it to steal the hearts of mankind from our Father in heaven, must of necessity be false.

In a former part of this discourse, the fact was mentioned, that David had done much for the people of Israel, while Absalom had done nothing for the advantage of his country. It is also worthy of notice, that when Absalom professed so much love for the men he deluded, and expressed so great a desire to do them justice, they did not think of inquiring whether David had ever wronged them, or whether he had ever ceased to love them. When

Absalom kissed them, they forgot every thing but Absalom.

Now, should mankind institute the inquiry, "Who has done most for us, God or the clergy?" they would be surprised that they should ever have been so deluded as to suppose that God is their enemy. He has ever loved us. "Goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our lives." No one will pretend that God ever wronged him—no one should suppose that God has ever ceased to love him. The sun still shines on the good and evil—the rains still descend on the just and the unjust; and to these visible objects our Saviour referred, as proofs of the Creator's universal love.

My Christian friends, the man who can preach the love of God, will never have much to say about his own. How weak, how limited, is human love, when compared with the love of our Father in heaven! He loved the world, when the world was dead in sin. And before ministers of the gospel can rightfully lay claim to the hearts of the children of men, they must prove, not by words only, but by deeds, that *their* love is stronger than the love of God. Let them remember, that "Christ died for the ungodly," and that in this the boundless love of heaven was commended to all mankind.

My desire is, that your hearts may never be stolen. "Son, give me thy heart." Do not love any thing so well as you love your Creator. If there is no safety in *Him*, there surely can be no safety in *man*. Well did the Apostle say, "We preach not ourselves; but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants, for Jesus' sake." O that preachers

would imitate Paul's example! O that they would say less about *their own* love, and more about the love of Christ! "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they who live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again."

SERMON V.

*Delivered in the Calloohill street Church, Sunday evening,
November 9, 1834.*

INFLUENCE OF DIVINE GRACE.

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid: how shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”—ROMANS, vi. 1, 2.

It is evident from the mode of expression in the first member of our text, that the writer had allusion to something he had before said or written. His language is, “What shall we say *then?*” that is, if what I have stated, and attempted to prove, be granted, what inference shall we draw from such principles?—It is also evident, that the Apostle, when he wrote these words, was conscious that his opposers would start an objection to his doctrine; and that he intended to propose their objection in plain terms, and meet it directly by his reply. He well knew that he had laid down principles, in the argument which precedes our text, that would induce the enemies of the religion of Jesus to say, “If that doctrine be true, we may live, and continue to live, in sin—for according to your doctrine, grace will abound let us sin as we may.”

To place this subject in a proper light, we must refer to the preceding chapter, and there learn what the Apostle had said, of which his opposers would

make such a wicked use. The Apostle is there drawing, as it were, a *parallel* between the condition of mankind, as they stood in relation to Adam, and as they now stand in relation to Jesus Christ. And we clearly discover that the argument was designed to show, that as sin and condemnation had universally extended over the human race, as they stood in relation to the first man Adam; so grace, and justification by grace, through the righteousness of the Redeemer, was equally extensive. In the 18th verse of the 5th chapter, the Apostle brings his argument to a conclusion in these words: "Therefore,"—(alluding to what he had already proved)—"Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." My friends, will you be pleased to remember these words, and when you retire to your houses, turn to your Bibles, and read this chapter carefully, noticing the 18th verse particularly. I will now ask you this question: Do you believe that any of the preachers of the present day, who profess to preach Universal Salvation—or any who have believed in that sentiment since the days of the Apostles, are able to state that doctrine in fewer words than the Apostle has stated it, in the text just recited? Never were words fuller of meaning, or more easy to be understood. Mark the language—"EVEN so"—not *half-way*, but *entirely*—"even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon *all men* unto justification of life." Just as certainly as came the judgment upon all men unto condemnation, justification unto life came upon all men,

through the righteousness of Jesus Christ, by the free gift of God.

The Apostle was acquainted with the objection that the Jew would immediately bring against his argument. He knew that the Jew would say, "If this doctrine be true, what authority is there in the law? 'For it is written, cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.'" Well, the Apostle had by no means contradicted, but rather substantiated, this position. He said, "judgment came upon all men unto condemnation," "for that all have sinned." He meets the objection that the Jew would bring from the law, as follows: "Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound." Did you ever think of these words? We should naturally suppose that the law was made to *prevent* offences! "Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound." Very remarkable words, indeed! What could the Apostle have meant? He declares, that "where there is no law, there is no transgression." A man might do whatever his inclination proposed, and commit the vilest enormities—but they could not be called *sin*, where there was no law. The law was given that cognizance might be taken of sin, and that men might know that certain acts constituted transgression. For there could be no such thing as transgression or sin, unless there was a law. "Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound." "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Mark this—He says, "all have sinned," and he also declares, "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign

through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." The next words compose our text. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?"

Now rises up the objector, and says, "Paul, if your doctrine be true, I may go on and commit sin, and grace will abound much more; and I might as well, and better too, go on indulging in sin." This was the objection which the enemies of the doctrine of Jesus, brought in those days. Paul knew it, and you, my hearers, are familiar with the same objection, which our opposers urge against us now. Their language is, "If we believed as you say you do, we should not care how we lived; we should unbridle our passions, and go on indulging in sin." I have not a doubt that they think they would. I charitably believe they are sincere. But they are greatly deluded. They do not understand the doctrine they oppose. Before any person is a suitable judge of the consequence of believing a doctrine, he must believe it. Let our opposers first believe the doctrine we preach, and then let them say whether they are disposed to commit all kinds of sin.

You see the position I am obliged to take. We state, that where sin abounds, grace much more abounds, resulting in justification unto life eternal. Thus, grace through Christ, is as positive, universal, and efficient, as was sin and condemnation, through the medium of the first man Adam. And what I have to show, if I succeed in my undertaking, is, that an understanding of the superabounding of grace beyond all sin, does not necessarily or naturally lead people to commit sin; but leads them away *from* sin; and that the Apostle here gives the only ration-

al answer which can possibly be given to the objection. "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" There is nothing that can prevent man from continuing in sin, but becoming dead to sin. He who is dead to sin, has no disposition to perform a sinful act.

I shall illustrate this subject, by reference to certain facts recorded in the Scriptures. I do it because the facts to which I shall refer, are amply sufficient for the work. I do it more particularly, lest the hearer should say the speaker is a contriver of his own arguments. I desire you to notice, that I make use of no arguments which the Scriptures themselves do not furnish; and I hope the congregation will bear me witness, that I rest my argument on the testimony of the Bible, that if there be any deception, it is to be attributed to the Word, which we, as Christians, take to be our guide.

The first instance to which I shall refer, to illustrate the doctrine advanced, is the case of the abominable wickedness of Joseph's brethren. And while I do this, I desire the hearer to keep an eye on the several points. First, the abounding of sin. Give your thoughts free scope; do not undertake, in any instance, to diminish the heinous nature of sin. Give to it all the latitude it naturally takes; and when you have looked carefully at the abounding of sin, look with equal care on the other hand, and see grace abounding much more than sin. In this instance we shall either show, that where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, or we shall fail to gain our point. Then we shall speak as to the consequences—that is, are those with whom grace much more abounds in-

duced to go on and commit more sin? Or does it make them dead to sin? We can certainly keep these three points in our recollection.

You have read the history of Joseph and his brethren, and it is familiar to you all. For that reason I select it as an illustration. I am sure that none of you are ignorant of the wicked conduct of Joseph's brethren towards him. Could hearts on earth be harder than their's? They knew how their venerable father loved that child—how tenderly and affectionately he regarded him; and they knew he was their brother,—and yet in an evil hour, being moved by envy and deadly hatred, they tore him from the bosom of their father—they sold him into slavery; and, in their purposes, they bade their brother Joseph an eternal farewell! Now observe how they endeavoured to cover their iniquity. They took his coat of many colours, and rent it, so that it should not appear to have been done by design. This coat they dipped in the blood of a kid, to make it appear that some evil beast had devoured the child. Then they coolly took the coat, carried it to their father, and spread it out before him. Their language was, "Father is this thy son's coat? We found it." No sooner did the venerable father behold the bloody garment, than he exclaimed, "Surely Joseph is torn in pieces; an evil beast has devoured him." The dear old man did not suspect his children of being concerned in such an outrage; yet they could stand by, with hearts hard enough to see their father in such anguish, and not relent. They tried to comfort him, to be sure; but he refused all comfort, and said, "I will go down into the *grave* unto my son mourning."—But I must make this story short, for two

reasons: First, I shall not, if I detain you longer on this part of the subject, have so much time to refer to other particulars; and secondly, your recollection of the whole story precludes the necessity of enlarging. You recollect that Joseph was soon raised to authority, and became governor of Egypt, and stood next in authority to Pharaoh the king. He had foreseen in a dream which Pharaoh had, that there would be seven years of plenty throughout the land, succeeded by a severe famine of equal duration. He was therefore appointed by the king to be lord over Egypt; and he prudently stored the abundance of the products of the seven years of plenty, to serve during the seven years of famine, which were to follow.

Now, my friends, you have a right, and so have I, to believe, that while Joseph was doing this work, and storing up the corn in Egypt, he very frequently thought of his brethren. With what intention did Joseph labour until the time of the famine? He believed that the famine would compel his brethren to come down into Egypt. With a kind and friendly heart, no doubt, he thought of and intended the benevolence which he afterwards displayed. He thought the time would soon arrive, when he should be enabled to supply the wants of his brethren from his own stores. The years of famine came, and multitudes from the adjacent country rushed into Egypt, and Joseph was looking out from day to day, to see his brethren. His heart was ripe for it—he was full of grace towards them. He desired to see them, and by and by they came, and he knew them, but they knew not him.

Let me pause a moment: I can hardly proceed

with this account, without remarking how exactly it answers to our benevolent Jesus, who was the bread of God, who came down out of heaven to give life to the world. How often have I contemplated, with a grateful heart, heaven's unbounded love to the human race; and how ardently have I prayed that all, *all* might become the happy and blessed partakers of this bread of life, which Jesus brought to mankind. Did Joseph know his brethren before they knew him? Yes, yes, my hearers; and Jesus knows us before we know him. Jesus knows the transgressors, and knows them to be the objects of love, grace, and mercy, while he is yet a stranger to *them*.

After Joseph had passed his brethren through certain trials and afflictions that were necessary to make them sensible of their wickedness—and when he was under the necessity of retiring from their presence that he might weep in secret for the love he bore them, it came to pass at last, as he could no longer hide himself from them, that he dispersed the Egyptians, and stood confessed before them. “I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt.” And they were troubled at his presence. How surprised were they to think that they stood before the lord of the land of Egypt! Joseph could now do what he pleased with them; they could not resist him—they were now in his hands. He was once in their's, and they maltreated him, and sold him as a slave. They are now in *his* hands, and at his entire disposal. And what does he do? Harken, my hearers, harken to the words of mercy which fell from the lips of the benevolent Joseph. Are they not enough to break the heart, though it were of

marble? "I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt; be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you to preserve life." He prepares his own table; invites his brethren to sit down; serves them with an abundance of food; provides them all the good things of Egypt; makes them welcome to all, without taking one farthing of their money; and blesses them to the fulness of his power, and to the fulness of all their wants.

Now, my hearers, what think you of this? Did not grace, in this instance, abound much more than sin? Does not this appear lovely! Behold the tear of compassion trickling down the cheek, and listen to the gracious words proceeding from the lips of the lovely Joseph!

Well, says the hearer, "We discover two things you have mentioned: we see the aggravation of sin, on the one hand; and grace abounding much more than sin, on the other." Now comes the last point. What was the consequence? Did the brethren say, "Joseph, we are very much surprised; you are more merciful than we could think of;—if we had been told that we should meet with Joseph, and that he was lord of the land, we should not have come here; and now we find you here with this authority, and you are so full of mercy as to forgive us all our wrong: and not only so, but you are afraid lest we should be grieved with ourselves because we sold you! Such mercy is beyond all expectation. If the question had been proposed to us, What favour do you desire? we should not have asked for so much as this. But, Joseph, you are very imprudent—you have forgiven us all our transgressions, and

our evil conduct towards you has not alienated your affection from us; we say you are very imprudent, and we may as well go on, and do you all the harm in our power." Says the hearer, "It is impossible. I know they did not." And why did they not? Every person present is ready to assign the reason—"They could not do it." The love that Joseph manifested towards them reached their hearts, and filled them with the same spirit of love towards him. They were dead to the envy and hatred they formerly felt—dead to the sin they had before committed; and now they loved Joseph, and Joseph loved them; and it was impossible for them to feel towards Joseph as they formerly did. Now our text inquires, "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" The subject is as clear as the sun at noon day; and you must know, that it was the goodness and compassion of the benevolent Joseph towards those brethren, that softened their hearts and filled them with love. And this love was his security against their evil conduct in future.

We will now try another case. You recollect that some of the enemies of Jesus accused him of being a friend of publicans and sinners; and in his reply to the accusation, he used several parables. Among others, is the following: "There was a certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that fall-eth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living." Now look at this youth—how much was he like

many are at the present day. Did he go to his father, as he should have done, and say, "I am young and need counsel of thee: give me some advice respecting the improvement of my time and talent?" No, he did not. No such advice was asked for. The language of his conduct was, "I am tired of your way of living; the duties you have imposed on me do not accord with my wishes—I do not feel contented—I believe I could do much better with my property if I go, than if I remain with you; give me what falls to me." He did not ask for, but repudiated, the counsel of his father. "I shall be happy to have the property in my own hands; it will be safer than in yours." How many poor, vain young men, in all ages, have deceived themselves in the same way! They have felt that if they could get away from parental restraint, they could enjoy happiness, and delight themselves with all good things;—but it generally turns out as it did in the parable. They dissipate health and property, and plunge themselves into the depths of ruin and distress. This youth lost all his property, became a poor beggar, destitute and forlorn; and in this condition joined himself to a citizen of the country, and was sent into the fields to feed swine. And "a famine arose in the land, and he began to be in want; and he desired to be fed with the husks that the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him." In this condition he came to himself. He had been wandering in his mind; and so it is with every sinner. He departs from the path of truth, in hopes of being rendered happy by it. What a mistake! Many people would indulge in sin, were it not that they fear they shall be punished. There are some

who say, they would go on in sin, if there was to be no punishment in eternity,—regardless of the punishment received in the earth. Our opposers are under this kind of restraint, according to their own acknowledgment. They would delight in sin, if they could persuade themselves to believe that they would not be banished from the favour of heaven!

To return to the parable. What did the youth say when he came to himself? “How many hired servants of my father’s house have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger? I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee; and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.” He was so hungry and so wretched, that he was now willing to take the place of a servant, if he could only eat bread in his father’s house. He could well remember when he moved in the family circle at home; when he had waiters around him at his command; when he basked as it were in the sunbeams of affection and love. But now he felt that those days were past. He was even willing to yield up his sonship. “I am no more worthy to be called thy son.” How painful the thought! a son ready to give up his sonship! I have transgressed; let me serve thee; let me till the soil; let me labour; I will do any thing,—only give me bread!

You have noticed the experience of this youth, and you have observed the humiliating consequence of his folly. What did the father say in reply? Did he reproach his son, and tell him that he had dishonoured the family, and conducted so badly that

it would be inconsistent with his designs and his justice, to grant him the privileges of a child? No, not a word like it. What did he say? Do you recollect the first words his father uttered on this occasion? "But the father said to the servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." All this was intended as a demonstration of the joy of the father, on that happy occasion. Now what do you see in this? You see that grace abounded much more than sin. Sin had abounded on the part of the son; but on the part of the father, grace abounded much more.—The question now comes up, namely, what effect had this superabundance of grace on the feelings of the son? Did he say, "Father, I am surprised at your kindness; I did not expect this. You are very imprudent. I shall certainly go away again. I will dishonour you more than ever; for I perceive that all my sin has not alienated your affection. You seem to love me more than before, and I find that where sin abounds, grace much more abounds; so that I may as well commit all the sin I can!" He did not say so, did he? No. Now I ask you this question, *Why* did he not? Your candid answer is, "Because he *could* not—he was dead to sin, and did not desire to leave his father's house." And why did he not? Because the grace flowing from his father's heart produced an equilibrium of love and affection. He and his father enjoyed the society of each other—they sat down and supped together. This was the pleasure grace was capable

of producing in the heart of a transgressor *them*, and it will do the same now. And I presume you are ready to allow, that the abounding of grace had not any tendency to lead this youth into a repetition of his sins.

I will ask your attention to another circumstance, illustrative of the same subject.—You remember that Simon the pharisee invited the Saviour to dine with him, and Jesus accepted the invitation. What it was that induced Simon to give this invitation, we are not informed. But probably it was, that Simon had heard of the fame of the Saviour; and the question arose, whether Jesus was a true prophet, or an impostor; and he thought if he could get him to his house, he could decide the question. Jesus went. And a woman who was a *sinner*—(you will observe, that the pharisees used the same terms that are now in use, sinner and saint)—a woman came in with an alabaster box of very precious ointment, to anoint the head of our Lord. She also washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head. Simon stood a silent spectator—He looked on and reflected, and came to the conclusion in his own mind, that if this man were a prophet, he would know what manner of woman this was; and she being a sinner, he thought that Jesus was also a sinner, and an impostor. He made up his mind, I suppose, to permit the thing to pass off quietly, and to allow his guest to depart as soon as he pleased. But the matter concluded differently. Jesus said, “Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he said, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor, which had two debtors: the

one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered, and said, I suppose—[he said he *supposed*, but he *knew* all the time]—I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, thou hast rightly judged. And he turned unto the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thy house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: [oil is a much cheaper article than ointment,]—but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.”—Here closed the interview on this occasion. And what do you see in all this? “Why I see the very dangerous doctrine, that grace abounds much more than sin.” According to the logic of some people, it was remarkable that Simon was speechless, and did not reply. They marvel that he did not say to Jesus, “It is a pity that I was not as great a sinner as this woman! I do not love you as much as she does, because I am not so great a sinner. [For this is the conclusion which it led to.] If I had only been as great a sinner as she, I would love you as well. I will now go on, and commit as many sins as she committed, and then I will be as great a favourite as she appears to be!” My hearers, this

would have been just as sound an argument as we are ever favoured with by our opposers.

What did Mary do? Did she say, "Lord, I am astonished at such grace; it is beyond all calculation, and if I had known all this, I would have been a greater sinner! I will now go on, and commit more sin, that I may receive more from thy kindness." Well, is not this a good argument? "It is good for nothing," says the hearer. Does the text give a reason why she did not talk in this way? Yes, and I desire you to notice it. Mary was dead to sin. Her sin was killed and destroyed by the affection and forgiveness of her Lord; and sin was overcome, and she loved the Lord Jesus from that very moment. She did not forsake him. She went to his trial and condemnation; she was with him at the cross; and she was the first to witness that the stone had been removed from his sepulchre!

My friendly hearers, whether you are professors of religion or not, you have not washed your Saviour's feet with the tears of penitence, if you speak in the manner which your humble servant has just alluded to. Before you bring forward this argument again, I humbly pray you to make yourselves acquainted with that divine grace which abounds much more than sin; and then say, "How shall we who are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

May I, without too severely taxing your patience, ask you to look at St. Paul's case. Behold him as a persecutor going from Jerusalem to Damascus, to punish all who believed on the name of Jesus. He says he was mad, and persecuted the saints unto death. He made havoc of the church, entering

every house, taking men and women, and immuring them in dungeons and prisons; and he acknowledges, that when Stephen was stoned, he himself kept the clothes of the persons who stoned him. Now see him engaged in this wicked work of persecution. Hear what he says. As he was on his way, he heard a voice, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And he said, "Who art thou, Lord?" Hear the answer—"I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." What did Paul say then? "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Then Christ says, "Rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee; to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith which is in me."

Let us pause and reflect. What! all his sins forgiven in a moment! Well, did he go on, and commit more sin? No, my hearers; but he said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" He is the author of the text; and what is his argument? "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we who are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

My brethren and friends, it is with the warmest affection of my heart, and with the strongest solicitude, that I exhort you to take this subject into se-

rious consideration; and if you can possibly detect any fallacy in the reasoning, be careful to acquaint yourselves with the fault, and communicate it to *me*. It is high time that I knew my mistake, if I am deluded. But I declare honestly before God and man, that I have laid the subject before you this evening as I believe the word of God warrants. And I humbly desire you to do the subject and yourselves so much justice, as to acquaint yourselves with it thoroughly. And before you say that this doctrine leads to licentiousness, you must be able to show that the goodness of God leads men, not to repentance, but to sin. Your experience will teach you better than this. If you ever become acquainted with Christ, and feel the power of his resurrection, and become partakers of his blessed Spirit, you will feel no disposition to say, I will continue in sin, that grace may abound.

SERMON VI.

*Delivered in the Callowhill Street Church, Wednesday Evening,
November 12, 1834.*

REFUTATION OF THE SERPENT'S DOCTRINE.

“And the Serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.”—GENESIS iii. 4.

Your speaker desires to mention some of the reasons which have induced him to bring this subject before you this evening.

It is well known, everywhere, that the denomination to which we belong, are accused of believing the doctrine which the serpent preached to Eve in the garden. Now, so far as this accusation is believed, so far honest people will believe that we are in the wrong, and of course will condemn the whole doctrine. They will feel no disposition to inform themselves concerning it, nor even to hear what we have to say in vindication of it. It follows that we, as a denomination, owe it to ourselves, to our opposers, and to community at large, to show, if we can, that we are not correctly accused by our opposers. Setting aside every other consideration, you will perceive that I have a sufficient reason to take up this subject; for one of my objects in doing so, is to show, that we neither believe nor preach the doctrine of the serpent. We owe this to ourselves, on the principle that it is not agreeable to any per-

son to stand accused before the community, without having the privilege of showing that the accusation is not correct. And here I will remark, that our accusers should be as ready to hear our defence, as we are to make it. For while they think of us as they do, they must certainly feel unpleasantly toward us. If, then, there is any way to remove the cause of those unpleasant feelings, it is our duty to attend to it—for we would always rather entertain favourable, than unfavourable, opinions of our fellow creatures.

Another consideration induces me to lay this subject before the congregation. We humbly and honestly believe, that our opposers, in reference to the accusation in question, are precisely in the situation of those of whom St. Paul speaks in Romans ii. 1: "Wherefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art, that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest, doest the same things." "What," says the hearer, "does the speaker intend to reverse the case? does he mean that those who accuse him of preaching the doctrine of the serpent, do the very thing themselves?" You have this question in your minds, and you are ready for an answer. The speaker will give it to you plainly. I have no more doubt, that our accusers do the thing of which they accuse *us*, than I have of their existence. Although this position may have the appearance of retaliation, I can assure you that it is not stated in any such spirit, nor with any disposition to deceive. It is stated simply because it is believed to be a fact, and because it is a fact of which our accusers ought themselves to be informed. We feel the spirit of

charity towards them, (and we would cultivate, and hold it fast;) we believe that what they do, they do ignorantly. They have no intention of preaching the doctrine which the serpent preached. They do not believe they *do*. They are honest to themselves in this case; but I firmly believe they have committed the mistake referred to; and while they are doing this very thing, they think *we* are doing it.

There is yet another reason why I attend to this subject. It is a reason which applies to community generally. I am persuaded that people in general do not understand the manner in which temptation operates. If the power of temptation were understood by them as it ought to be, they would be benefited by such knowledge. I desire to have all persons on their guard, so that when temptation assails them, they may be able to detect and resist it. It was by this power that our first parents were drawn away from innocency and happiness in the garden. By the power of temptation, sin entered into the world, and death by sin.—These considerations will justify your humble servant in bringing this subject before you. What more useful topic could I bring, than one that will fix in the understandings of the young that which will serve as an efficient barrier against the power of temptation in all future time.

You may think that your speaker has laid out more work than he will be able to get through with in one sermon. But the truth of the several points to which I shall refer, is so exceedingly plain and simple, that we need not dwell long upon any particular. And I feel satisfied that I have the attention of my audience, in such a way, as to make it necessary

for only a little to be said. When the minds of hearers are roving the world all over, a man might preach all night, and not be understood; but, with attention, a little said, in a right manner, will bring truth to the understanding. I shall now proceed with the subject.

And in the first place, an attempt will be made to show how our opposers have been led into the error of supposing that we preach the serpent's doctrine. And while I am about this work, let the hearer keep in mind, that I do not question their sincerity,—they really believe what they state.

Our opposers are acquainted with the Scripture, in which God said to Adam, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The doctors of the church have affixed a signification to the word *death*, which signification is the foundation of the mistake I am about to expose. They say that the *death* spoken of, comprehends death temporal, death spiritual, and death eternal. You have their sentiments in their creed, as follows:—"All mankind, by the fall, lost communion with God, fell under his wrath and curse, and so were made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever." Our opposers believe this statement as firmly as they believe the Bible. They say, that God threatened man with eternal death, if he sinned; and that if he partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, endless torment would be his doom. But our accusers say, that Universalists

think there is no such thing as endless torment, or eternal death; and that this is precisely what the serpent said to the woman in the garden,—“Ye shall not surely die.” And hence they think that we contradict the word of God as directly as did the serpent. In this manner they make out the accusation, that we preach the serpent’s doctrine. They make it out to their own satisfaction, and you perceive how they do it. We see precisely the situation in which our opposers are placed, in regard to this matter. Their creed declares that God threatened man with eternal death. This creed lay on their cradles. They have no doubt that it teaches the doctrine of the Bible. Proceeding on this ground, they have made out the charge referred to. They have done so honestly. They have believed the creed from childhood. They believe it from the force of education, and the habits of thought in which they have lived all the days of their lives. My friends, I am not blaming them; but this does not destroy my right to defend myself, or the denomination to which I belong, or to correct the error, by showing how the mistake has happened, and wherein it is a mistake. “But wherein is the mistake?” says the hearer. I will endeavour to point it out.

The doctors of the church have affixed a signification to the word *death*, which the Scriptures furnish no authority for. Let us ask the question, Do the scriptures anywhere speak of *eternal death*? “Why,” says the hearer, “I have heard it so frequently preached, I thought the Bible was full of it.” Now, this is a grievous error. The phrase *eternal death*, is not in the Bible!—Let us reason

a moment. When a penal law is enacted by one of our legislatures, is it not expected that the penalty will be promulgated so soon as the law is published? Would it be proper to enact a penal law, and publish it, but by no means allow the people to know the penalty, until a crime prohibited by the law is committed? Or would it be just for a legislature to enact a law, prohibiting certain acts, and then, after the law has been violated, to say what the penalty shall be? This would be perverse business. It would be making an *ex post facto* law. "Very true," says the hearer, "but what of all that?" I will tell you. If the Creator intended that eternal death should be the consequence of transgression, would he not have said, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die" *eternally*? Most certainly,—but no such thing is added. This alters the case remarkably, and even radically. For as the doctors of the church have predicated their accusation against Universalists, upon the supposition that eternal death was threatened to Adam—and as there is no Scriptural authority for this supposition—the mistake is radical—and the allegation brought against Universalists is gone in a moment. It is totally lost.

This, then, is the state of the case; and we call upon our accusers to make good the charge in question, by proving the premises; to prove, by Bible testimony, that the death spoken of in the Scriptures, had any allusion to eternity. Certain it is, that God said nothing about it. So far, then, as this matter stands, the accusation against us is a falsehood. We never held up the idea that sin does not bring death to the transgressor. We say that sin does not bring *eternal death*. "Have you any au-

thority for that?" says the hearer. Yes, I have, and you are ready to receive it. I will give it to you in the words of Scripture. Romans v. 20, 21: "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Now, if sin had abounded unto *eternal* death, then *grace* abounded *much more* than *eternal death*! Let us continue the quotation: "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." But if sin reigned to *eternal death*, could grace reign to *eternal life*? It is impossible; for "all have sinned;" and if all have died an eternal death, none can be made the subjects of *grace*, either here or hereafter. Now, it is impossible that *grace* should abound *much more* than *sin*, if sin has abounded to *eternal death*. Sin must be dead, before this eternal life can be received. Sin must be removed; and therefore it is that Jesus must be "the Saviour of the world"--he must be "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." Now, when the sin of the world is taken away, there can be no death, for there will be nothing to support it. Sin supports death, and when sin is removed, the consequence is gone.

"Well," says the hearer, "you have certainly exposed and refuted the mistake which your accusers have made in bringing such charges against you; but there is another thing which you must make out, namely, that those accusers are doing the very same thing that they charge you with doing." This is not a difficult task. They say, that the death

threatened in the Bible, was an eternal death in the world to come. Please to keep this in your minds. They say, too, that "all mankind, by the fall, lost communion with God, fell under his wrath and curse, and so were made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever." Do our accusers believe that all mankind will die that eternal death in the world to come? Do they believe that every one will die an eternal death? By no means. We should wrong them, if we thought so. They admit that Adam and Eve did not die an eternal death in the world to come. Again. Do they believe that all the rest of mankind will die this eternal death? By no means. How do they avoid this admission? They say, that God provided a Saviour, to save man from eternal death. Let us suppose this to be the case. Is it not supposable that the serpent knew this at the time he spoke to the woman? If he did, he was safe in saying, "Ye shall not surely die," inasmuch as our argument supposes he knew that God would send a Saviour into the world, and save mankind from eternal death.—They tell us, that "God, from all eternity, elected some men and angels to everlasting life." Allow this to be true; and suppose that the serpent knew it to be true, was he not on safe ground, when he said, "Ye shall not surely die?" Certainly. It is as plain a case as can be stated.

Again. Our accusers tell us, that if we repent of our sins, we shall not die that eternal death. They zealously exhort us all to repent of our sins. Why do they exhort us to repent? Their answer is, "that you may escape eternal death." Well, then, according to their idea, we can by repentance avoid the

eternal death threatened in the garden. If the serpent knew all this, had he not good authority for saying, "Ye shall not *surely* die?" For, according to this idea, we may eat as much forbidden fruit as we choose, and afterwards repent, and go to heaven!—You see this subject plainly. Of all men in the world to manage an accusation of the kind I have adverted to, our opposers are in the most miserable condition; for they are doing the very thing of which they accuse *us*.

The attention of the hearer is now specially requested. "The serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die." According to our opposers, the death here alluded to was eternal death in the world to come. Let us suppose that a day or two after the transgression, the serpent paid the woman a visit, and asked her respecting her condition, and whether she had eaten any of the fruit? "Yes, I ate of it." Well, are you dead? "No, I am *not* dead." Has the threatened penalty come upon you? "No."—Now, would not the serpent have had a right to say to the woman, "I told you, you would not surely die! You are comfortable and well; eternal death has not come upon you; you are here alive; death has not come upon you!" Now, my hearers, be careful to remember, that God did not say, If ye eat of this fruit, ye shall die *in eternity*; but "*in the day* that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." *In the day of the transgression*. There is nothing *future* in the declaration. And if that death did not take place in the day of the transgression, we have no Scriptural authority to believe that it ever *did*, or ever will take place.

Leaving the doctrine of the serpent, and the doctrine of our opposers, out of the question, we come directly to the subject of inquiry—What was that death, and when did it take place?—We shall not venture to be very particular, in describing that death theoretically; but we have no hesitation as to the time it was experienced. It took place in the day of transgression. I understand the text to mean precisely what it says; and I understand, too, that the language of the serpent denies what was asserted by the Almighty.

The question resolves itself into something that you can judge of, just as well as the speaker. I simply ask the question: Do you know any thing about the nature of transgression? Have you ever been so unhappy as to know yourself a transgressor? You will answer in the affirmative. Do you know what kind of death you died in the day of transgression? If you do, you know the truth of the subject—for the death that every transgressor dies, is the death spoken of in the word of God. It is the very death that the serpent said should not take place.

My hearers, you have all been little children. Let me speak to you as such. Your parents laid certain restrictions upon you, and required of you the performance of certain duties. I ask you to recollect, if you ever disobeyed your parents? What feelings did a consciousness of wrong doing bring upon your minds? It must have produced some effect. You must have felt differently from what you did before you transgressed. What, then, was the effect of transgression? You say, "I felt very miserably, indeed, when I came to consider that I had

done what my parents forbade me to do, or failed to perform what they had commanded to be done." Now, my hearers, it makes no difference what name you give it—but the sensations you then experienced, the Scriptures call *death*. How did you feel about coming into the presence of your parents, after you had transgressed? You felt unpleasantly, and gladly would you have kept out of their sight. How exactly your feelings corresponded with those of Adam and Eve, when the Lord visited them in the garden, in the cool of the day! They were afraid, and hid themselves. They were conscious of transgression; and so every child in the community feels, after disobeying the commands of his parents. He feels a disturbed operation within.—Well, you have grown up from childhood to manhood and womanhood; and does transgression now induce any better feelings than it did when you were children? I fervently desire you to weigh this matter seriously.

Another point claims our attention. You never transgress without temptation. How does temptation talk to you? Does it not always promise something agreeable? Does it not tell you, that it is not a matter of certainty you will be detected and punished? Let us suppose a case. Do you suppose a man would steal from his neighbours, unless he thought the thing stolen would be of some use to him? No. Would he steal if he knew he would certainly be detected and punished? No, he would not. Now you see the power and manner of temptation. It promises something good, and it promises an escape from detection and punishment. And un-

less a person believes these two things, he will not become a transgressor. I am now speaking of the principles on which the human mind acts. Man never transgresses unless he expects to gain something by it; and unless, also, he thinks there is some way to escape with impunity, the natural, proper penalty that belongs to the crime. It is precisely so in every situation of life. This is what produces sin. If a person can be persuaded that he will be profited by sinning, and that he can avoid punishment, he will commit sin. But if he be not persuaded to believe these two things, he will not transgress. Eve was in this condition precisely. She was told that the fruit was good, and she believed it. She was told, that if she transgressed, "she should not surely die." She believed the serpent—she ate, and died!

"But," says the hearer, "does not the speaker know that he is talking against his own sentiments? Does he not believe that the sinner can avoid all punishment?" If you think so, my friends, you are under a mistake. I believe that no individual can commit a single sin, without receiving punishment therefor. "Do you not believe," says the hearer, "that Jesus came into the world to save the world?" Yes. "Do you not believe that God wills the salvation of all men?" Yes. "And do you not believe it is necessary for every man to repent?" Yes. But I do not believe that Jesus came into the world to save mankind from being punished, if they sin. I believe that all disobedience will receive a just recompense of reward. The Apostle says, Heb. ii. 2, 3: "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience re-

ceived a just recompense of reward; how shall *we* escape, if *we* neglect so great salvation." Neither under the law, nor under the gospel dispensation, is there any provision made for man to avoid the punishment of sin. There is but one way to avoid punishment; and that is, to avoid sin. All walk in death, so long as they walk in sin. I appeal to the experience and consciences of all, both young and old; and I ask, whether you ever did wrong without bringing condemnation to your souls? You will all say, that you never did. This is all I ask you to acknowledge. "But," says the hearer, "what do you make out by that?" Plainly, that what God said was true—"In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." When does condemnation come? Do you commit sin, and then does condemnation come like something without either wings or legs, as though it would never overtake you? No. It comes like lightning. The moment you know yourself to be a transgressor, you feel the deadly sting; and it is impossible to commit wrong, without feeling the infliction of that poisonous arrow which causes death. "The wages of sin is death." Every one must die in the day of transgression.

Do you not see that we hold precisely the reverse of what the serpent held, and precisely the reverse of what our accusers hold? In the way in which our accusers have explained the subject, they make out that man can live in sin, year after year, and finally never experience the death they say was threatened. Here is a great error, and I am very sorry it exists. Our accusers not only commit that error, but they have really united with, and contend in favour of the position of the serpent. They tell

us that if there was no such thing as eternal death, and if there be no hell in eternity, the better way would be to continue in sin! My friends, grave divines have told me, that if they believed there was no eternal hell, they would lie, swear, cheat, rob, get drunk, and commit many other crimes, which decency forbids me to mention! They would do all this, if they did not believe in an eternal death! By this means they make out to tell us, that such food is good and pleasant to the taste. "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant." They confirm this proverb, in their language. They say they would commit all those wicked acts, were it not for an eternal death! Temptation speaks the same language to all, and if such deception were not believed, men would not commit sin. I regret to see those who stand in the place of preachers, and whose duty it is to dissuade men from transgression, use arguments which lead to sin. Such arguments have always led to sin. The doctors of the church say, that it would be better to live in sin if there was no death or condemnation hereafter. They say, that our present happiness consists in committing sin. This is the bent of their argument; and herein is the prophet's prediction verified: They work hard to earn wages to put into a bag that has holes in it. They say, if we repent just before we die, we are just as safe, as if we repented in youth. Go into your penitentiaries, and ask the inmates of your prisons, if they do not believe in eternal death? They will say, Yes; and they will tell you their parents taught it to them. Then you will say, "Why are you so wicked?" They will answer, "We expect to repent before we die." And such,

no doubt, is their expectation. You see what haste our clergy are in, when a man is put into prison for murder. Their object is to induce the murderer to repent, so that he may not be doomed to hell hereafter. And they seldom fail of success. And when the man dies, they say he was forgiven! This is an awful doctrine; for this man did just as they say *they* would do, if they believed in no eternal death!

My friendly hearers, the moment we become conscious of having done wrong, we are "dead in trespasses and sins." We should clearly understand this doctrine. Teach it to your children, and the lesson will be invaluable to them. But so long as they are taught that they can be happy while doing wrong, they will walk in disobedience. The doctrine of truth, that misery is the immediate attendant on transgression, is the only safe doctrine for man. Be careful then, under all circumstances, and do not be deceived, when temptation says, "Ye shall not surely die." I humbly ask you to remember what the speaker has told you this evening—that *you will certainly die in the day of transgression.*

"But," inquires the hearer, "you say Christ came into the world to save the world; and if every sin receives a just reward, what benefit does Christ confer upon us?" My friends, Jesus could be of no benefit to us, if his ministry and mediation had been designed to save us from being punished for sin! What benefit would it be to children to be saved from parental reproof and correction? It would be an evil. It is necessary to correct them, when they do wrong. In this view, punishment is a blessing. Did our Saviour come to save us from blessings?

As Christians, as Universalists, we deny that he has ever exercised any dispensation of punishment over us, which was not necessary and profitable.

What, then, did Christ come to save us from, if not from eternal death?—Suppose the doctrine of eternal death was in the Bible—do you think that Christ would come to save us from it? Look at this subject. God makes a hell in the invisible world, in which to torment sinful man. Would that same God send a Saviour into this world to save sinful man from going there? No, no, my hearers; that would be building up with one hand, and pulling down with the other.

What, then, did Christ come for? We believe what the angel himself says, for he was a minister sent from God out of heaven. When the birth of the Saviour was announced, the angel said to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus," that is, a Saviour. A Saviour from what? From the punishment of sin? No. From hell? No. "For he shall save his people *from their* SINS," not from the punishment of sin, if they are sinners. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the SIN *of the world*," not the *punishment* of the sin of the world. The salvation designed for man, is a salvation from all desire to commit sin. So long as men commit sin, so long they will be punished. But the moment they are saved *from sin*, they are saved from the death of sin. And this is the salvation of the Redeemer. Look to Jesus as your Saviour from sin. But how will he save you? I answer,—by commending his Father's love to you. He is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. If you are acquainted with *him*, you are acquainted

with the love of our Father in heaven. Look unto Jesus—for through him, the divine favour was manifested to a sinful world. In him you may behold a Saviour whom you can both admire and love. And, my friends, you will discover that all his precepts and commandments are love, peace, joy and comfort; and if you obey them, you can say as David said, “in keeping them, there is great reward.” Whoever understands and knows the truth, the truth will make him free. Whoever is acquainted with Jesus Christ, and with his spirit and power, will love and obey him, and thus be saved from sin. This is the salvation of the gospel; it is deliverance from sin itself. Be not deceived; be not deluded. Do not believe in any salvation that will save you from being punished, if you do wrong. Do not believe in any other salvation than that which saves you from sin, and which will bring you into the path of obedience; for this is the only peaceful and happy path in which mankind can walk.

“Well,” says the hearer, “this is good doctrine—but it does not go beyond the confines of this world—it does not touch the world to come.” What do the Scriptures say? “The gift of God is eternal life.” We believe that our heavenly Father has constituted us in Christ, heirs of immortality, and eternal life. We have this by *inheritance*. We have peace, joy and consolation, by *obedience*, in the present tense. We have life and immortality by the free gift of God. How did you obtain your present existence? It was solely the gift of God. So also will be the life and immortality brought to light in the Gospel.

I desire you to understand these subjects, and be careful not to bring them into confusion. You see one part of the community bringing forth good works, and another part who are not thus engaged. But let me inform you that you need good works for your comfort in this world, as much as you need business to procure you sustenance. You do not attend to business because you expect any thing hereafter for it; but because your present necessities require it. Just as imperatively do your present necessities require that you should do right. And better would it be to go without bread for the support of your bodies, than to be without that wholesome food which is freely dispensed to every one who obeys the commandments of God.

I humbly submit these remarks to your attention, and I beseech you to reason and reflect coolly upon them; and I hope that, by making a practical application of them, you may reduce them to a solidity, which will remain with you, and enable you to avoid temptation and sin. Listen, listen attentively, to the monitions and commands of your heavenly Parent, and obey them; and great will be your consolation and peace.

SERMON VII.

*Delivered in the Lombard Street Church, Friday Evening,
November 14, 1834.*

GROWTH IN KNOWLEDGE AND GRACE.

“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—2 PETER iii. 18.

Having been honoured with an invitation from the “Young Men’s Universalist Institute” in this place, to deliver a lecture before them this evening, I have selected the passage just read in your hearing, as being appropriate to the occasion—believing it will lead to some inquiries and remarks, which may, if duly considered, contribute to the promotion of the great end and object of the institution.

The language of the text, supposes that there is such a thing as growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And it is a remark worthy of particular notice, that the human mind is so constituted that it rarely remains long stationary; and this is the case in every stage of life. If we are not acquiring knowledge, we shall be likely to be losing it. If we are not increasing in grace, we shall be likely to be decreasing in it. If we are not engaged in the laudable enterprise of acquiring useful knowledge, it is more than probable we shall be engaged in acquiring that which is worse than useless.

We are not to understand the Apostle as intending to confine the exertion of the human intellect exclusively to the particular subject named in the text. It is unquestionably the duty of all men, and especially of young men, to acquire a knowledge of the arts and sciences, by which they can render themselves useful to themselves and to society. The Apostle, however, speaks as a *minister of the gospel*; and his exhortation regards the Christian religion and the Christian dispensation. It is therefore necessary for us to improve the text, with special reference to the great subject which the Apostle had in view. And this we shall do, without supposing that this subject is the only one which deserves our attention, or that it requires us, in any way or nature, to neglect the wide and extensive range of duties belonging to common life, and the interests pertaining thereunto.

What does the text require? It requires us to grow in knowledge in relation to the great mission of Jesus Christ into our world. And it supposes that by growing in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall, at the same time, be growing in grace. And there is something very beautiful and instructive in this suggestion. For if there be any thing in the dispensation of the gospel—if there be any thing in the character of the Lord Jesus Christ—or if there be any thing unkind or ungracious toward the children of men in the purposes of his mission,—then, growing in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ would not, at all times, and on all subjects, increase us in grace. The supposition that there is any thing in the dispensation of the gospel that is contrary to favour, or contrary to

the very nature of grace, is a mistake which has not existed in the world for centuries, without having produced its baneful and deleterious effects. Acting on this mistake, zealous professed Christians have supposed, that they were acting in conformity to the principles of the religion of Christ, when they were acting as enemies of the human race, with passions as fiery and ungoverned as those of Saul, when he thought he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus. Acting under this mistake, Christians, through many centuries, have thought they were commissioned to exercise all cruelty and barbarity toward some of their fellow creatures. So that the knowledge which abounded with *them*, was the knowledge of that which did not lead them to be gracious, or to exercise favour and kindness towards their fellow men.

But here I must not detain you. We shall ask the question again: In relation to what, may we endeavour to grow in knowledge, so that by so doing we may at the same time be growing in grace? We must *grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*. But different times and circumstances vary the duty with regard to the acquisition of such knowledge. I will explain what I now state. When Christ commanded his disciples to preach the gospel to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, they were to confine their labours to the commonwealth of Israel exclusively. The great labour then to be performed, was, to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah who was promised in the law and prophets. It was necessary for them, then, to grow in knowledge, and to acquire such knowledge as would enable them to convince the

Jews that the Messiah had actually come. And if you read such of their speeches as were made to the Jews, you will find them labouring to effect this object particularly. But when the blessed Saviour had sealed his testimony with his blood, and had arisen from the dead victorious over death and the grave, he commissioned his Apostles to go into "all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Now, the gospel commission is enlarged. Before, it was confined to the commonwealth of Israel. It is now extended unto all nations. And when the apostles were sent to preach to the Gentiles, it was necessary for them to be possessed of that kind of knowledge of the dispensation of the gospel, respecting the Messiah, as would enable them to carry conviction to the understandings of both Jews and Gentiles. And this work embraced the labour of convincing the Gentiles, that their idolatry was not true worship—that there was one only and true God, who had absolutely sent a messenger into our world, which messenger was Jesus Christ—and that this messenger had fulfilled the Jewish prophecies; thereby demonstrating, even to the Gentiles, that the divine revelation recorded in the Old Testament, was valid and good.

If you will look at this subject one moment, you will see how it was necessary that the Gentiles should understand that the Old Testament prophecies were true. And until convinced of this fact, they could not be convinced that God had made a revelation to man. And until they could be convinced that God had made this revelation, they could not embrace the Messiah promised in the law of Moses, and spoken of by the Prophets.—Here,

then, you will perceive that the wicked Jews, who were the murderers of the Lord of life and glory, unintentionally assisted in the great work of carrying conviction to the Gentile world, that the Scriptures of the Old Testament were true. How did they do it? They did it by fulfilling the prophecies; by putting Jesus to death; for if they had not put him to death, then the prophecies of the Old Testament would not have been fulfilled. In this case, the apostles could not have brought this powerful argument to the Gentile world, to support the dispensation of the gospel they were sent to preach. In relation to this particular, you will read the 11th chapter of Paul's epistle to the Romans, where are recorded these remarkable words, addressed to the Gentile believers: "For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy." What does he mean by the Gentiles obtaining mercy through the unbelief of the Jews? Did you ever suppose that unbelief did any good in the world? What does the Apostle mean? He means that the Jews, by their unbelief, and by their rejection of the Saviour, fulfilled the prophecies concerning him. Now when the Apostles could take the prophecies, and lay them before the Gentiles, and show them that the Jews, who expected the Messiah, had themselves fulfilled these prophecies, it was next to impossible for the Gentiles to disbelieve, or have any doubt upon the subject. For the Jews had kept the prophecies in their own custody. They had fulfilled them precisely as the Prophets declared they would. This entirely clear-

ed the way to carry the gospel to the Gentiles. And when the people proclaimed this in the hearing of the Jews and Gentiles at the same time, the Gentiles rejoiced in the truth.

But the case is not now as it was then. We are not required to convince the Gentile world that a revelation has been made, nor that God sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. We are not Gentiles—we are not Jews—but we are Christians, by birth, and education, and habit. This alters our condition extremely from the condition and circumstances of the early disciples.

I will introduce a supposition. Suppose we had been brought up Jews, and belonged to the synagogue, and were subsequently converted to Christianity; we should then feel it our duty to be constantly engaged in possessing ourselves of knowledge by which we could convince the Jews that the gospel of the New Testament was valid and true. But we are not Jews, and never were.—Or let us change the supposition. Suppose we were so circumstanced that our labours were needed to convince the Mahomedans that their religion is not the true religion. In this case, we should find it necessary to make ourselves acquainted with the Koran, and also with all the precepts of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We should also find it necessary to institute a comparison, so as to convince the Mahomedan that the New Testament is preferable to the Koran. Though we have not this labour to perform, we have a work to do, and knowledge to acquire, and enough use for this knowledge, in the circumstances in which we find ourselves placed.

There are three classes of the community who

stand opposed to the doctrines of the gospel, as we understand them, and which doctrines distinguish us as a sect or denomination. Now, it is in reference to these three classes of community that it becomes us, in our time, to acquire knowledge, to enable us to meet their opinions, and convince them that their views and doctrines are not correct; and that the views *we* entertain, the doctrines we embrace, and which distinguish us from *them*, are substantially and verily true. "To what particular classes does the speaker refer?" says the hearer. I will answer this inquiry.

We find a class of men in the Christian community, a denomination of professing Christians, who hold, that "God, from all eternity, elected some men and angels to everlasting life"—that he passed by other some, "and ordained them to dishonour and wrath, to the praise of his vindictive justice"—and that the number of men and angels thus predestinated and foreordained, "is so definite and certain, that it cannot be either increased or diminished."—This doctrine has been called, and is now called, by a very respectable and numerous denomination of Christians, the doctrine of Jesus Christ. And if said denomination be in the right, we, who profess to believe in God's universal, impartial, and efficient goodness, are certainly in the wrong. We believe *we* are right, and that *they* are wrong; and it is necessary for us to be possessed of such a knowledge of the Scriptures, such a knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ, of its character, and the grace it reveals, as to be successful in combating the erroneous sentiment referred to—a sentiment which

has long exercised a mighty sway over the human intellect.

There is another very respectable denomination of Christians, who have repudiated the doctrine of election and reprobation, and have adopted what is distinguished as, and generally known by the term, *Free Will*, or Arminianism. This class, my hearers, believe that a day of probation has been appointed to man, and that our eternal state depends upon the right and proper use of what they term moral agency; and that we ourselves, by the use of said agency, are to decide the question, whether we shall hereafter be forever blessed in the presence of God, or sink down into interminable despair, and endure all the miseries, and all the wretchedness which is portrayed in the doctrine previously noticed. If this doctrine be true, it is just as certain that we are under an egregious mistake as we should be, on the supposition that the doctrine of Calvinism is correct. And it is necessary for us to become acquainted with the Scriptures, and with the doctrine and precepts of our Lord Jesus Christ, in order that we may be enabled, if possible, to carry the conviction to the understandings of our Arminian brethren, that they have placed our eternal destiny on a basis which the Scriptures do not place it upon; and that they have thereby taken away from the believer in Jesus, that heavenly and divine consolation, which his pure gospel is calculated to inspire.

“Is there another class of community,” says the hearer, “who stand opposed to Universalism? and is it our duty to be prepared to meet and convince *them* likewise, of the reality of the religion we

profess?" Yes, there is. And these, too, are *our brethren*—though they cannot, properly, be considered brethren of the Christian community. Nevertheless, they are our brethren. I allude to those who have renounced Christianity—those who, though brought up in a Christian land, have come to the conclusion that there is no truth in the doctrine of revelation—that man is a mere animal of to-day, whose career begins with his temporal existence, and closes forever when the body dies. These brethren sometimes carry their incredulity so far, as even to render themselves blind to the existence of a First Cause, and to pride themselves in being considered as, and denominated, *Skeptics*.

I must occupy sufficient time to observe, that towards these different classes we cherish no feelings but such as become brethren. We believe they are all deluded; and we are satisfied that their several errors are the current errors of our time. And if we study to acquire divine knowledge, it should be with a view to avail ourselves of suitable means to meet those several opposers of the true doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to convince them of their error. I shall not make any selection out of their particular notions. I feel no disposition to give any preference to either of them—for of two absolute errors, or of three real wrongs, I know no good in either of them; and therefore have no desire to institute a comparison, believing them all to be false. I feel equally bound to exert the powers which my Father in heaven has given me, to wage war against—if you will allow the expression—to wage war against all false notions and ideas. I do not mean to be understood as waging war against

any of my fellow creatures, who have imbibed the errors adverted to. I speak in reference to *opinions*. Pure love to such individuals should prompt us to exert all our powers to convince them of the truth; and no other disposition should sway our feelings. For, mark well, and forget not, that while we grow in *knowledge*, we must grow in *grace*; and the more we know about our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the more gracious we shall feel towards our fellow creatures, and the stronger will be our desire to do them good. And if, by any possible means, we can remove these errors from their minds, it will be conferring a blessing upon *them*, and happiness upon ourselves. We shall do them a greater favour, than we do to the hungry when we feed them, or to the naked when we clothe them.

How then shall we proceed? My friendly hearers, the work is very easy. There is no difficulty in performing our duty in this respect. It is true, that *study* and *research* are required. But I will ask, what is more pleasant than to exercise our faculties and powers, in investigating important truths? It is not simply the attainment of the knowledge, or the result to which we come, that is the pleasure,—not that alone—but it is a pleasure to exercise our minds, in investigating the subject, and in discovering the truth. It is so with all sciences. How happy and pleased is a scholar, while investigating a science! Every moment he discovers something he did not see before! The progress of inquiry is pleasant; and when the result is obtained, the joy is increased. He who searches for water, finds indications of success as he proceeds; and soon the spring rises up, and he slakes his thirst.

My hearers, with Christian professors we may get along with the Bible. They who believe in election and reprobation, and they also who hold to the Arminian scheme, all go to the Bible, and say that the Scriptures teach their doctrines respectively. How shall we meet them on this ground? I answer, —we must examine those Scriptural testimonies which treat on the subject of man's salvation, and the dispensation of the gospel; and we must be careful to keep two questions in our minds. The first is, Do the Scriptures which treat of man's salvation, speak in limited, or in unlimited language? That is, does the language referred to embrace *all mankind*, or does it embrace only a *part*? The second question is, Do the Scriptures which treat of man's salvation, speak in *uncertain* and *conditional* terms, or do they speak in *certain* and *unconditional* language? These two points prepare us to meet our adversaries on both hands. For if those Scriptures which treat of man's salvation, speak in *general* and *universal* terms, then, of course, the partial doctrine of election and reprobation is refuted. Study the Bible, and you will not find in it what our opposers have in their creed. Their creed says, that "God from all eternity elected some to everlasting life, and passed by and ordained the rest to dishonour and wrath." This doctrine is of human invention, and is found in a human creed. And if the doctors of divinity who wrote that creed, had possessed the modesty of Christians, they would have paused before they wrote the sentence above quoted. They should have inquired, whether they could put that sentiment in Bible language. The thought never struck their minds. If it had—and if they had

paused a moment to find said Bible language, you never would have found that doctrine in their creed! They say God elected *some*. Compare this statement with the promise of God to Abraham. "In blessing, I will bless thee, and in multiplying, I will multiply thee; and in thee, and in thy seed, shall ALL NATIONS be blessed." The Lord does not say, in thy seed shall SOME of the human family be blessed; but he says, "in thy seed shall ALL nations be blessed,"—yea, "ALL the families and kindreds of the earth." St. Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians, calls the preaching of God to Abraham, the *gospel*. Then the simple truth of the gospel is, that in Christ, the seed of Abraham, *all the nations, families and kindreds* of the earth shall be blessed. Take this one promise; look at it carefully; examine all its relations in the whole Bible; and then ask yourselves, whether there is a single word wanting to make the doctrine *universal*; or whether there is a single word therein* that is calculated, in any degree, to contract or narrow it. Have we not a perfect right to call upon those who believe in the doctrine of election and reprobation, to inform us upon the subject, how it has happened, that if it was the predetermination of God, from all eternity, that millions should suffer misery forever, that he should have made such a promise of universal blessedness to Abraham? Those who believe in election and reprobation do not preach in this way. You have heard them preach, and did you ever hear them take up this subject, and dwell upon it, and insist upon it, and endeavour to enforce it upon their hearers, that God preached the gospel to Abraham in the manner before noticed? You never did. Do you

know why they never preach in that manner? The honest answer is, they do not believe what God preached to Abraham. If they did, they would preach it also.

Let us look a little farther. Our adversaries on the other hand, are willing to grant, that the gospel is universal in its promises—but they contend that said promises are *conditional*—depending on human agency for their fulfilment. Is this true? “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” Is there any thing like human agency intimated in this promise? Is there any thing like human agency set up as the basis of this heavenly blessing? There is not. If endless punishment be true, God must have eternally known, that the terms of the gospel would not be complied with by the whole of the human race; and he must have known that some men would so use their agency as to render themselves forever wretched. In this view of the subject, the Almighty could not with propriety have said to Abraham, “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” He could not properly have made this promise, if he intended that man’s eternal destiny should rest on the use or abuse of human agency; for at the time he made the promise, he must have known what human agency would do, and what it would not do. It is impossible to reconcile the idea referred to with the express promises of God.

We will inquire still further. The Prophet Isaiah uses these remarkable words. “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house, shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and

all nations shall flow unto it." Now he prophesied about what should happen in an after day; and by this prophecy the same sentiment is taught as in the words, "all nations shall be blessed." By what authority could the Prophet Isaiah assert positively, without any *conditions* or *ifs*, and say in the name of God himself, that all nations should flow to the house of the Lord? How much do you suppose he rested on human agency in this case? Shall we use the familiarity with the Prophet, just to ask him how he knew what he said? He gives the answer in the 25th chapter. "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees; of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it." How much human agency is there here? Look at it carefully, my friends, and remember that this is but a specimen of the current language of the gospel in the Old and New Testaments.

But the hearer will say, "Then you exclude human agency altogether, and make man a mere machine." We shall not pause in this place, to enter into the subtilities of metaphysics—but are there not some blessings that we receive from God, which are not procured by human agency? We certainly enjoy some such blessings. The blessing of existence, for instance. God has given it to us. Did this existence depend on our moral agency? Certainly not.

It is the free gift of God. Contemplate yourself, with all your faculties and powers, mental and physical. Did human agency procure them? Look at the creation around you. Behold the sun, the moon, and the stars, the earth, and the rivers, and the vital air,—did human agency procure them? No. The God of mercy and favour blessed you with them all. And the moment you were born into the world, you were born heirs of these blessings, and none of them were dependant upon human agency. I do not mean that we have no power to do something for our peace and comfort. But is there any more moral philosophy, or Christianity, in supposing that the *future* world depends on *us*, than in supposing that *this* world does? Where do the Scriptures say, that immortality, and glory, and eternal life, are any thing beside the free gifts of God? The great Father of our spirits, who has accompanied the gift of this existence with every thing necessary for our comfort, will unquestionably provide the future state of existence with every thing necessary to make it a blessing. Are you afraid to trust your heavenly Father and divine Benefactor? I hope not. David expressly says, “All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.” He did not suppose that this universal in-gathering of our heavenly Father’s children is suspended on the fickle caprices of human agency—but he rests the glorious consummation on the effectual working of divine power and love.

Time would fail me, and your patience would be exhausted, were I to take notice of the range of this subject, as it is explained and illustrated in the

Scriptures. Nevertheless I desire you to look at the 53d chapter of Isaiah—every verse of it seems to be designed for the purpose of directing the mind to the Lord Jesus Christ. “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. By his stripes we are healed....He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.” Do you see human agency in this? And yet I do not pretend that there are not duties devolving upon *us*. We should exert our abilities and powers, in accordance with the precepts and doctrine of Christ. There is enough for every one of us to do. But we contend that God himself has power to carry his purposes into effect, and that he has all the means at his disposal which are requisite to accomplish his will.—“Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one *all things in Christ*, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him; in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” How plain this is! Not according to *man's* agency or counsel, but “after the counsel of *his own* will.”

I deem it unnecessary to extend this subject further. But I will remark once more before I leave it, that the student in the Bible should be careful to keep these two points in his mind: How do the Scriptures read on the subject of man's salvation?

Do they speak in terms that embrace the whole human family? or does the language thereof embrace only a part? And again. What is their language in relation to certainty or uncertainty? Do they regard human agency as the means, or in other words, as the foundation on which the divine promises rest? Is the salvation of man suspended on his own agency and his own will, or is it suspended on the will and agency of Almighty God? Take, for instance, the conversion of Saul of Tarsus to Christianity. Peruse the account with attention, and with this question in your minds: Was it Paul's agency that effected the conversion? or was it the power of the Lord Jesus Christ that accomplished the work? Be satisfied in relation to this case, and you may feel satisfied about all other instances.—I might appeal to the experience of many persons who are now present. I might ask you, how you became believers in God's universal salvation—and many of you will inform me, that it was not by *your own* will that you became Universalists. How did you become so? “Why, I undertook to disprove the doctrine, and went to the Bible to obtain its assistance; and by the testimony thereof I became convinced of the truth of Universalism.” And vast numbers throughout the whole country, who are now believers in Universalism, became so in this way. Their choice or agency did not make them believers in the doctrine. They had no more desire to believe it, than Saul had to believe in Christianity, when he started out with his letters of authority, on the business of persecution. I have been told by individuals, that in their attempts and arguments to disprove our doctrine, they became convinced of its

truth, against their own purposes and desires; and they were constrained to say, as Peter said, "What was I, that I could withstand God?" If those who are now Universalists, could have withstood God, there would not have been a Universalist in the land—for it was a cross a few years since, and no small one, for a man to avow himself a Universalist.

"But," says the hearer, "would there not be a difficulty in meeting the other class, who are generally called *Skeptics*?" It may be difficult to *convince* them, but I am satisfied of one thing,—It is not difficult to acquire that knowledge by which we can at all times bar their arguments, and defend ourselves against their attacks. It is not unfrequently the case, that there is a great want of candour in them, and this renders it difficult to carry conviction to their understanding. They have not been minute in their investigations, and are consequently restless and uneasy. We may lead them in a certain train or direction, and they will immediately fly into another; and thus vary their course, so as to make it difficult to get hold of their understandings. But I can say, with all confidence, that there are writings of Christian authors, in which you will find, if you will read them with care, overwhelming evidences of the divinity of the religion we believe. And for this purpose I would refer you to Lardner, Paley, and Chalmers, and other champions of the Christian faith. Their arguments are before the world, and are such as we think cannot be refuted; but if there are those who think they can refute them, they are blameworthy if they do not attempt it.

I will direct your attention to the following argument. Christianity is in the world. It professes to be predicated on the miracles recorded in the New Testament. Now, our brethren who oppose Christianity, say that those miracles never were wrought, and that the whole history is false. As this is the position they take, they are required to inform us, how Christianity first came into the world. It is not of such ancient date, that the records of antiquity are silent about it.—We will introduce a comparison.

Suppose the youth of the present generation neglect to read the history of our country, and by and by, through their neglect, the doctrines of the revolution of these states, and the way and manner whereby we obtained our independence, should become lost to them. But there has been a practice of celebrating the independence of the United States on the 4th day of July; and the youth are very happy on these anniversaries. By and by, one of them inquires what it means. Some old person informs him, that it was on the 4th of July that the independence of the United States was declared. “Independence of the United States!—The United States were always independent!” No, says the aged man, we were once colonies of Great Britain; and had to fight for our liberty, and thousands of lives were lost in the struggle, and we finally obtained it. Says the youth, “I do not believe it. I believe that this celebration is a mere tradition, and that there is no real foundation for it.” Well, now, the question is, how shall this person be convinced that he is in error? There *was* a time when we were colonies. He must be put to the test. Let

him take the history of the country, and read as far back as the first celebration of the 4th of July. And if he does this candidly, he will say to the old gentlemen, "I have found no such thing as a celebration of the 4th of July, anterior to the independence of the United States; and I now believe that you are correct in what you told me, and that this practice is really founded on the fact that the independence of the United States was declared on that day." But if he can rebut this matter by history, and show that there was another such celebration, and prove it to have been a practice existing for centuries before the date of the independence of the United States, he will do something that we think he never can do.

I ask the skeptic to be honest enough to take the history of Christianity, and the institutions of Christianity, and see how far back he can carry them. And if he can find them existing further back than the time of Christ, he will refute Christianity; and if he does not, he never will. This presents us with such a concatenation of evidence in proof of the religion we profess, that we feel unconcerned with regard to all the intrigues, vain philosophy, sarcasm, and wit, that the skeptic makes use of.

Here I shall leave these brethren, and hope that we may always treat them kindly, as Jesus himself treated unbelievers, bringing to them all the evidence in our power, of the truth of the religion we profess. And I wish to remark now, that growing in the knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ, will always increase us in grace. Let us keep this in our minds at all times, and particularly when we meet with our adversaries. The Apostle says,

“Knowledge puffeth up.” Men may think they know a great deal, when they know very little; and such men may feel inimical, uncharitable, and censorious towards those who do not believe precisely as they do. But, my young friends, let me affectionately caution you against the indulgence of such feelings. For whoever grows in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, grows in grace, and in that “wisdom which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy;” he grows in the spirit of meekness and humility, as manifested by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

It is a laudable undertaking, and the object in view is a worthy one, for the youth of the land to unite for the purpose of assisting each other in investigating truth. I am more than pleased that there is such an institution in this place, as the “Young Men’s Universalist Institute.” My young brothers, will you receive a word of exhortation? Be careful, in all your researches, in all your studies, that you keep these two things together—*knowledge* and *grace*. Do not separate them. Be careful to remember, that the grace of the gospel, the good will of the Redeemer, the mercy of God, and the love of heaven, should inspire our minds under all circumstances; and where we are opposed, let us be careful to meet the opposer in the spirit of Christ. Ask yourselves the question, when you are engaged in argument, How would our divine Master advise me to speak, so as to obtain his approbation? Let love fill your hearts; and I repeat again,—while you

grow in knowledge, be careful that you also grow in grace.

And, my young friends, be not discouraged at the embarrassments which lie around you. There are those who vindicate our doctrine, who have seen it in a very different state from what it is now. When your humble servant commenced his career in life, he does not know that he could count ten individuals who had opened their lips on this continent, in advocating our doctrines; and there were not more than two or three regular societies formed, professing to believe as we do. What a change has he lived to see! I have been engaged in the conflict for more than forty years, and I now invite you to enter on the prosecution of the work before you. I have not met with any thing, in all the means which have been arrayed in opposition to our faith, nor in all the errors which have existed, both on the right hand and on the left, that has produced one moment's discouragement in my mind. Perfect confidence in the truth of God, and in the fact that truth is great and will prevail, has inspired me with courage to go forward, and prosecute the Christian warfare.

Remember, my young friends, that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places;" and if you contend in the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, you shall be victors—you cannot be overcome. But if you swerve from this direction, it will not be necessary for your enemies to overcome you—you will be overcome of yourselves.

It becomes you, therefore, to "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is THE WORD OF GOD."

SERMON VIII.

*Delivered in the Lombard Street Church, Sunday Morning,
November 16, 1834.*

BAPTISM INTO CHRIST.

“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”—GALATIANS iii. 27, 28.

In reading the Epistle from which the text is selected, the hearer will learn, that the Apostle therein designed to dissuade his professed brethren from giving that heed and attention to the rituals of the law of Moses, which certain teachers had zealously enjoined. He expresses much concern for them, inasmuch as he had been informed that they had, in some way, been so diverted from the spirituality of the religion of Jesus Christ, as to seek justification before God in the rites of the law. And hence he labours, at considerable length, to show them, that the law was never designed as the dispensation by which man should obtain divine justification. He endeavours to prove, that the dispensation in which man is justified before God, is that faith or covenant which was confirmed to Abraham before the law was given. And he declares, that “the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after” the covenant was confirmed, “cannot disannul, that it should

make the promise of none effect." In the 8th verse of the third chapter, he is careful to mention the very gospel which was preached to Abraham: "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel to Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." And he is equally careful to mention what he understands by the seed of Abraham; for he observes, that it was not said, "of *seeds*, as of many; but to thy *seed*, which is *Christ*." In Christ, therefore, as the promised seed, all nations shall be blessed. In this covenant, men were to seek justification—and not in the rituals of the law.

You discover how this argument bears on the general subject. The Apostle was endeavouring to lead his brethren away from the delusion under which they laboured; and to this end, he desired to convince them that they should seek justification before God, by no other power or dispensation, than by that covenant which God made with Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the law. His argument is very just. A law must not be allowed to operate *ex post facto*, nor to disannul any thing which existed by promise before the law was given. It should not therefore be supposed, that the law covenant possessed authority to disannul the gospel covenant which was made with Abraham so many years before.

The question is asked in the epistle from which the text is selected: "Wherefore then serveth the law?" And the proper answer is given, "It was added because of transgressions, until *the seed* should come to whom the promise was made, and it was ordained in the hands of a mediator." Moreover,

the law is called a *school-master*—and the purpose for which it was instituted, is thus expressed—“*to bring us to Christ,*” not to drive us away from him. We all understand the office and duty of a school-master. It is his duty to give your children such instruction as they may require—but he is not authorized to claim your children as his own, to keep them away from you, or to put them under such regulations that you yourselves can exercise no control over them. He has no right to say to your children, “If you love me, and obey my precepts, you shall be heirs to the estate of your parents; but if you do *not* love me and obey my commandments, you shall be disinherited.” The power and authority of the school-master extends not so far as this. Nor was it in the power of the law of Moses to disinherit a single individual embraced in the covenant which God made with Abraham. That law was simply a “school-master to bring us to Christ,” the promised seed. Hence says the Apostle, “But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.”

Let us look again at this faith, or covenant. It did not regard *the house of Israel*, in an especial manner: it did not exclude any nation, kindred, tongue, or people, under heaven. It did not in any degree rest the promised inheritance upon the observance of any outward ritual, by either Jew or Gentile—but it covered the whole race of man. “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” And this corresponds with the text: “For as many of you as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor

free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." There was neither Jew nor Greek, because the promise did not regard them *as such*; and in the gospel covenant no such distinctions can ever exist, because all mankind are therein acknowledged to be one in Christ Jesus.

Having thus endeavoured to point out the Apostle's general theme, and to notice his general argument, I will direct your attention to the particular topics of the text.

BAPTISM is mentioned. This is a subject about which there has been many conflicting views, and much unprofitable controversy in the Christian church. There has, indeed, been much enmity engendered in the minds of those who have been engaged in the dispute. You are well acquainted with this fact. You know that, even in our times, several sects of professing Christians differ so widely on the subject of baptism, as to be unwilling to sit down at the same communion table. Some believe that the rite should be performed by sprinkling, some by pouring, others by immersion. Each, however, contends strongly for the use of water. Some say that infants are proper subjects of baptism—others deny this position, and assert that adults only should be baptized. Upon these different and conflicting views, different denominations predicate the immunities and privileges of church membership and fellowship. But I am satisfied for myself, and I think you will be satisfied, that the subject of baptism, as it is stated in our text, is not taken cognizance of by those contending parties in the Christian church. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ."

The question arises—What is meant by being baptized into Christ? Is it water baptism, in any of the various forms of administering the rite?—We may investigate this matter, by inquiring as follows: Do those who believe that infants should be baptized, imagine that a little child is baptized into Christ, after having been sprinkled with water? Plainly not—for that child can possess no knowledge respecting the manner or design of such baptism. He has no power to exercise his senses concerning the matter.—Let us now query with those who hold that adults only should be baptized. Do they believe that any adult person is a fit subject of immersion, until he is converted from nature's darkness, and introduced into marvellous light? They do not. They properly contend that a man must first be spiritually baptized. This is right. And I presume that a person thus baptized into Christ, would be no less so, should he be immersed in water; neither do I suppose he would be any more so after immersion than he was before.—I will propose another question: Are not persons sometimes immersed in water, and admitted into church membership, without knowing any thing about being baptized into Christ? The reply must be, "This circumstance often happens." And yet there are many who predicate Christian fellowship on the fact and manner of the performance of this rite!

I have not introduced this subject for the purpose of standing as a mediator between the several sects of Baptists, nor to contend with either of them. My object is, to ascertain the true meaning of the expression, being *baptized into Christ*. And I am satisfied, that if we come to understand this subject

properly, we shall discover that water has nothing to do with it, and that there is no necessity whatever for the outward element.

“But,” says the hearer, “how can you make that out?” I will endeavour to inform you. Does not the argument of the Apostle suppose, that a person is baptized into Christ by believing what Abraham believed when God preached the gospel to him? Yes, surely. By the power of faith in that covenant, the believer is baptized into Christ. It results in justification, not by the works of the law, but by faith. *Abraham* was baptized into Christ—for he believed the promise of God—but we have no account that any water was used on the occasion. I repeat, that Abraham was baptized into Christ—and so was Isaac—and so was Jacob. God preached the same gospel, and made the same covenant with each of them, namely, that in the promised seed, all the nations and families of the earth should be blessed. They severally believed, and were thus baptized into Christ.

Let us refer again to the 8th verse of the chapter of which the text forms a part. “And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel to Abraham, saying, In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” Keep an eye on the several points of this passage. 1st. The thing to be done—“God would justify the heathen.” 2d. The way—“through faith.” 3d. The appointed medium—“preached before the gospel to Abraham.” 4th. The extent of the gospel—“in thee and in thy seed shall all nations be blessed.”—Now, “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” In this way, Abra-

ham, and Isaac, and Jacob, were baptized into Christ; and every one who has the same faith, is baptized in like manner. There is no water in the case. There was no necessity for water before the law was given—nor is there any necessity for water now that the law is abolished. It is the same gospel since the abrogation of the law, that it was before the establishment of the law. And if the *patriarchs* were baptized into Christ without the use of water, *we* may thus be baptized without using the outward element. I will add, that all the prophets and holy men of old, who saw the day of the Messiah, and the glory that should follow, were partakers of the like spiritual baptism.

We must now take special notice of what it is to be baptized into Christ. It is to be so baptized into him as to put him on. It is to be clothed with his spirit; to possess the same wisdom and love; and to exercise the same gracious and merciful disposition, as were possessed and exercised by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—To illustrate this subject, I remark, that people may be baptized into the spirit and wisdom of a particular man, or into the spirit and wisdom of a human creed. Without intending to give offence, I may be allowed to remark, that Luther and Calvin were baptized into the spirit of their doctrines. Do we suppose that those reformers were baptized into the spirit and wisdom of the Lord Jesus? We can judge men only by their fruits. History certifies us that Luther possessed a persecuting spirit. He was willing to have the Bohemian brethren punished, because they did not agree with him in theology; and he quarrelled with Zuinglius

about the eucharist, and they could hold no brotherly communion. In this they certainly did not manifest the spirit of Christ.—John Calvin procured the burning of Michael Servetus at the stake, because the latter disagreed with the former on certain theological points. If Jesus, the son of Mary, could have been standing by Calvin's side—and if Calvin had proposed the question, Shall I burn this heretic? what answer do you suppose our Saviour would have given him? There is a circumstance related in the New Testament which furnishes the desired information. When our Lord entered Samaria, some of the villagers refused to receive him. This aroused the spirit of anger in the hearts of James and John; and they said, “Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?” What was the answer? “But he turned and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.” My friends, if those disciples had been an hundred times immersed in water, they had not been baptized into Christ. And it is a clear case, that John Calvin was not baptized into the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Baptism into Christ, as we have seen, signifies being baptized into his spirit and wisdom. The wisdom which dwelt in him was the wisdom from above, which “is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, *full of mercy* and of *good fruits*, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” This was the wisdom in which God preached the gospel to Abraham; and this is the wisdom we must receive

into our hearts, before it can properly be said that we have been baptized into Christ.

Let us inquire a little farther. What is the doctrine of Jesus? "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." This is the spirit of the doctrine of Christ. If evil is done unto us, our way is clear; we must meet it with goodness. "The whole need not a physician, but they who are sick."—These are the words of Jesus. They signify as much as though he had said, "I look upon sinners as sick persons. I look upon the wicked, as a physician looks upon the sick. As that physician would treat the sick, so my spirit treats sinners. I will do them good, and nothing but good." This is the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ; and whoever loves his enemies, and does good to those who hate him, is, in the proper meaning of the expression, baptized into Christ. And it very naturally follows, that "there is neither Jew nor Greek"—for the Christian is not to love a man because he is a Jew or Greek, or because he is of this or that denomination or class of men—but simply because he is a child of God, and as such embraced in the promised blessedness of the Abrahamic covenant. "What! a child of God!" says the hearer; "can any one be a child of God who does not believe in Christ?" The Apostle may be allowed to remove this difficulty. "And I say, that the heir, so long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world." The hearer will readily acknowledge that a disobedient son is nevertheless the child of his

father; and parental affection induces the father to place that son under tutors and governors, until reformation is effected. So we are all the offspring of God—and however vile any one may be, he is embraced in the promise made to Abraham, “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” In the time appointed by the Father, the disobedient will be brought to righteousness, and the wayward to holiness—for he hath “made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ.”

Let us who profess to believe the gospel which God preached to Abraham, inquire, whether we have been baptized into Christ? whether we have been baptized into his spirit and wisdom? This is a question which Universalists should carefully consider—for vain is our profession without the reality. If we profess to believe “the glorious gospel of the blessed God,” and have not put on Christ, we deceive ourselves, and our faith is no better than a mere speculation. If it does not bring us into the spirit of love and meekness, our faith can be of no possible advantage to us—for in this case, it would be of the head only, and not of the heart. Let it then be our chief aim, to keep our blessed Redeemer before our eyes, in all the loveliness of his character, doctrine and spirit. Let us imitate the example of our blessed Lord, who “suffered the just for the unjust, that he might bring them to God.” The spirit that dwelt in him, has for its object the conversion of the ungodly to godliness, and the unwise

to wisdom; and it is every way calculated to bring those who sit in darkness into marvellous light, and those who are under the dominion of death to the spiritual life and blessedness of the gospel of peace.

These suggestions are submitted to your serious consideration. But I cannot do justice to the feelings which produce lively emotions in my heart, without tendering to my friends in Philadelphia my most grateful acknowledgments for the kind attentions I have received from them during my stay in this place. And though this may be the last time I shall speak in this house, I shall never forget the fraternal and endearing friendship with which I have been made acquainted in this "city of brotherly love."

SERMON IX.

*Delivered in the Callowhill street Church, Sunday evening,
November 16, 1834.*

CONSTRAINING INFLUENCE OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”—2 Cor. v. 14. 15.

In every enterprise in which men become engaged, there are two particulars which demand special attention and regard. In the first place, *the object to be accomplished*. Unless we have a particular and definite object, as the *ultimatum* of our enterprise, distinctly in our minds, we are by no means prepared to put any means into operation for the accomplishment of the undertaking. When this is distinctly understood, and when we have clear views in relation thereto, the next thing to be considered, is, *the spirit of the enterprise*. For every undertaking in which man is engaged, is naturally calculated to inspire him with a certain spirit, which will correspond with the nature of the undertaking. Should this spirit disagree with the object in view, we become dormant and inactive, and care but little whether the work goes on, or is retarded; whether it be accomplished, or whether it be *not* accomplished.

These remarks apply to all the enterprises in which men engage; and they are therefore justly

applicable to the great theme of the religion and gospel of Jesus Christ. In the dispensation of the gospel, there must have been a certain design, a certain object, to be accomplished; and this must have been distinct and clear in the minds of those engaged in the enterprise. And perhaps it would be proper in this place, to bring the grand object of the dispensation of the gospel clearly before the mind of the hearer.

We shall come to the subject directly, by simply stating the question, What was the design of Christ's mission into our world? The answer to this question, defines the great and grand object, which the dispensation of the gospel has in view. The Apostle John says, "We have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." This testimony clearly furnishes the desired information. Listen to the declaration of Jesus himself, in relation to this subject. When arraigned before Pontius Pilate's bar, he uttered this language: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."

"But," says the hearer, "Jesus states *one* thing, as the object of his coming into the world, and the Apostle John states *another*; why do they not state the same thing?" My friends, they do. "We have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." It is by bearing witness to the truth, that Jesus saves the world. For he says, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Though the words are different, the meaning is precisely the

same. And here again you have it expressed in different terms. The beloved disciple says, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Now, to save the world, to be the propitiation for the sins of the world, to bring the knowledge of the truth to the world, all express precisely the same idea.

You then perceive, that our Saviour's object was the salvation of the world. The hearer will ask, "Does this include saint and sinner, believer and unbeliever?" Certainly—for who were believers, who were saints, when Christ came into the world? "Why," says the hearer, "all were unbelievers when Christ came into the world, to be sure; for all had gone astray, and every one had turned to his own way." Then, surely, he came to save a world of unbelievers. We can decide the question by the words of Christ himself. "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." This was the very object of his coming into the world. The Apostle Paul confirms this testimony, in that he says, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*; of whom I am chief." The very object then, of Christ's coming into the world, was to save sinners. We thus arrive at the conclusion, that where the Scriptures say, "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world," the meaning clearly is, that he came to be the Saviour of a world of sinners. "Yes," says the hearer, "this is plain enough." Well, then, in order to find any that Christ did not come to save, we must find some that are not sinners. Says the hearer, "We

have always understood it differently. It has always been held up, that if any are not saved, and are lost, and lost forever, it will be because they are sinners." But this argument is certainly fallacious, because, if they are not sinners, they do not need salvation. To urge the very thing that constitutes the necessity of salvation, as proof that salvation will not take place, is a poor argument—it is contrary to propriety.—We shall not dwell on this subject long, because it is too plain to be disputed; and I desire to draw attention immediately to the consideration of the *spirit*—the great spirit of the enterprise of the gospel and religion of Jesus Christ.

And what is that spirit? It is that which is named in the text, as the leading topic thereof—THE LOVE OF CHRIST. "The love of Christ constraineth us." The love of Christ, then, is the spirit of the great enterprise. And you will perceive the congruity between the great *object* to be accomplished, and the *spirit* of the undertaking. The object was, *the salvation of a sinful world*; the spirit of the enterprise was, *the spirit of love*.

I will endeavour to describe the spirit of Christ. There are many professed Christians who make considerable pretensions to godliness, holiness, and Christian discipleship, who come far short in their spirit, of the love of Christ. Men may be possessed of much love, and be perfectly destitute of the love of Christ. A man may ardently love riches, and be so swallowed up in the spirit and love of wealth, as to exert himself daily in order to acquire the object of his love; and this love may lead him so far astray from the path of moral rectitude, that he may injure thousands of his fellow creatures,

and defraud his poorer neighbours of their property, to swell his own coffers. This is far from being the love of Christ. A man may most ardently love honour, and fame, and power, and authority, in human society, and be very destitute of the love of Christ. For this love of honour and fame among men, has led thousands to attempt to ruin the characters of their fellow creatures, in order to exalt themselves. Little do they care how others sink, if themselves can rise. The more such love as this a man possesses, the more dangerous he is, and the less good will he do in human society. Another may be possessed of that which is considered a commendable love—a love of military valour, a pride of victory; and yet he may be destitute of the love of Christ—which destitution will expose him to the danger of violating the principles of moral right, and producing injurious effects in the community. We may possess, and delight in, the laudable affection of parental love; and yet, if we are destitute of the love of Christ, we may, by our parental affection, be led to injure our neighbours to accommodate our own family. How many thousands have there been, who, from a love of their offspring, and in order to enrich them, have ruined families, oppressed the orphan, and pulled down the widow's house upon her head! I will go further: A man may be exercised in the excellent principle and spirit of the love of friendship. There is scarcely any thing in society more lovely and praiseworthy, than to see a man who loves his friend, and who is willing to exert himself to do him good. I will carry this argument so far, as even to allow him to *jeopardize his life, yea, to lay down his life for his*

friend, and yet he may be destitute of the love of Christ!

“Is it possible?” says the hearer. Yes; and I think I have not strained the point. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” Here is the *ne plus ultra* of human love, as such. “But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet *sinners*, Christ died for us.” Sinners are his *enemies*, of course; and Christ’s love induced him to die even for his *enemies*. Here is a very great distinction, between simply human love, and the love of Christ. Pythias offered himself to the authorities of Syracuse as a pledge for Damon, and he was willing to die for him; but if he had died for Damon, he would have died only for his *friend*; and his love would have fallen infinitely short of the love of Christ, according to the Apostle’s statement. Where, in the wide world, did you ever hear of a man coming forth, and laying down his life, freely and calmly, for his enemy? My hearers, you must go to Calvary, to find the instance! You must look on the cross of your Redeemer, to find it! You must look on *him* who was wounded for our transgressions, who was bruised for our iniquities, and upon whom the chastisement of our peace was laid, to find an instance of a man laying down his life for his *enemy*! This, then, is *the love of Christ*. And this corresponds with the direction of the Saviour to his disciples: “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.” This is the old doctrine that Jesus Christ came to put away, and to plant a different doctrine in the place of it. To love some, and to hate others, is a doc-

trine produced by the wisdom of this world, and you will find it in every false doctrine. I will not confine it to Christendom—we may go to the Jews, or to the Gentiles, and so far as their doctrines are erroneous, they contain the old doctrine referred to.—“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you: that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” This is the doctrine, this is the love of Christ—to love sinners—to love our enemies—to regard for good those that are opposed to us, and those who are our deadly enemies. It would be well for each individual present to investigate his own heart—to inquire whether he is in reality a Christian, according to the description just given. Do you possess this spirit of love toward your enemies? That Jesus Christ possessed this love, and acted upon it, there can be no doubt; and this is the spirit of the great enterprise of the gospel. If Jesus had not possessed this love, he never could have been the Saviour of the world! He never could have been the Saviour of the world, or have given himself a ransom for the wicked, if he had not loved them.

LOVE, then, is the soul, the spirit, the life of this great enterprise. And when our doctors of divinity are endeavouring to make it out, that some poor wretched sinners shall be excluded from the favour of heaven, they are setting at nought the blood of the cross, and trampling the blood of the everlasting covenant under foot! How is it, that the learned

doctors of the church can so deliberately set up and make their cool calculations about the vast number of millions which they say it is probable, and more than probable, will be doomed to eternal torment for their sins, when the whole tenor of the gospel dispensation shows, that it was *to save sinners* that Christ Jesus came into the world? The Apostle Paul says, "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself *a ransom for ALL*, to be testified in due time." He thus states his reasons why we should pray for all men. And in our text he says, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again."

I will now ask your attention to a consideration of the proof that Jesus died for all men; or rather, the object of my present effort is, to illustrate this fact. It is recorded in the Scriptures, that "he gave himself a ransom for all." The text above cited thus testifies. And John says, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of *the whole world*." And Paul says, "that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." So that in the letter of Scripture, this question is decided.—Indeed, it was impossible that Jesus should die, on the principle that induced him to die, and being moved by the spirit that actuated him—it was impossible, I say, for him to die, and not to die for all mankind. I will illustrate this. You will

recollect, in ancient history, the enterprise which Xerxes undertook against Greece. With an immense army he marched against those few and small states. At that time it was supposed a thing impossible for Greece to withstand that host. Greece was looked upon as swallowed up, and gone. You remember that Leonidas, together with three hundred warriors, made up their minds to meet the army of Xerxes at the straits of Thermopylæ, and there lay down their lives. This Leonidas calculated upon, and so did his soldiers, before they left home, and bade their families an everlasting farewell. They were determined to give themselves for their country, and that at the straits of Thermopylæ they would shed their blood in defence of Greece. To be sure, Xerxes entered Greece, but his army could not conquer it. What was the reason? The blood of Leonidas, and of his three hundred men, had been shed there. Their's was the blood of the political covenant of the freedom of Greece. The shedding of that blood inspired the Grecians with such love of country and of freedom, that it was impossible they should be overcome; and Xerxes, with his four millions, was driven from the land. "We remember that," says the hearer, "but what relation has it to your subject?" I answer,—could Leonidas and his three hundred warriors, have died for their country, on the principle which actuated them, without dying for *all* their countrymen?—Could they select *some* of the states and families of Greece, and die for *them*, to the exclusion of the rest? No: Because the principle upon which they died was a patriotic love of Greece. And the enterprise embraced the principle which set Greece at

liberty; and there were thousands of unborn Grecians, who afterward enjoyed the blessing of liberty purchased by the blood of Leonidas. You see that as he died on the principle of patriotism, with a design to inspire his countrymen with a holy enthusiasm that never could be conquered, he must have died for all Grecians.

You are acquainted with the history of your own country. There was a time when these now happy, independent United States, were colonies of a foreign power. And there was a time when that foreign power saw fit to impose taxes on these Colonies, without the Colonies being represented in their Parliament; and were guilty of many arbitrary and unjust usurpations towards our people. But the history informs us, that there were men in the country who saw in these impositions, chains, and fetters, and bondage, and absolute rule,—an admonition which induced them to labour in the great cause of liberty and of human rights. It was not because they felt that they themselves were personally to suffer by it; it was not because they would lose their estates; but they looked at posterity—they looked into futurity, and they said, “If this is submitted to, our sons and our daughters will become slaves, generation after generation—we will not endure it. It is true, to withstand it, to redeem the country, it must be done at the price of blood; but as patriots of the land, we pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour, to maintain the independence of the country.” And the patriots took the field, and their councils the council chambers, and war went on, and blood was shed,—but not in vain. And we delight to hear our orators, on our

fourth of July celebrations, advert to the blood that bought our independence. We know what they mean by it—they mean that by the shedding of blood the country was freed from the iron grasp of tyranny and usurpation. The shedding of blood was the means. And you will admire their patriotism to the latest breath of your existence. Recurrence to those noble deeds inspires your children with enthusiasm; and you often refer them to the blood which was the price of our independence.—The question now is, Could those patriots die for their country without dying for all? There were many troublesome Tories in the land, who were embraced in the covenant of liberty as much as the rest of the people. They enjoyed peace after it came; and, blessed be God, we are willing they should enjoy it, and that without reproach. The principle applied to all the land; and the principle on which Jesus died, applies to the whole human race; and he could not have died on the principle which induced him to lay down his life, without dying for all mankind.

There has been much dispute among professed Christians relative to the question whether all may be saved, or only a part—whether Christ died for all mankind, or only for a part. Much logic, and ingenuity, and management, have been employed in this dispute, without either party knowing the principle upon which Christ shed his blood. Suppose I have a little conversation with one of our modern doctors on this subject—one who believes, or supposes, that only a few will be saved by the love of the Redeemer, and that Christ died for the elect only. Reverend father, you contend that Jesus did

not die for all mankind. I will put the question to you, and inquire, what you would do if placed in the same situation? Suppose you were called upon to die for mankind—would you die for a few, or for many,—supposing, at the same time, it was no more expense to you to die for many, than for a few? Here is a question which tries him—but I will continue it. Do you think yourself a real Christian? “Yes.” Have you ever experienced the love of Christ? “Yes.” And does that love of Christ lead you to love your fellow-creatures? “Yes.” How many of your fellow-creatures does it lead you to love? “Why, in fact, it leads me to love all mankind.” Are you sure that it leads you to love *sinners*? “Yes; I love sinners, and wish them well forever; and will do any thing to save them.” Very well—how many sinners would you die for? “I certainly would die for the whole.” And now are you not willing to allow to Christ as much honour as you take to yourself?—You will perceive that if we leave this question to our opposers to decide, they will decide it just as we do. They will say, that they would not themselves die for sinners, without dying for all.

We are now looking at *the principle*; and we contend, that Jesus could not have died, on the principle which actuated him, without dying for all sinners,—and if he *died* for them, it was because he loved them. And now comes the conclusion. “For the love of Christ constraineth us;”—it constrains us to this result—“because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not hence-

forth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them," and rose again."

Your humble servant was born a British subject; but in his tender years his country was free and independent. While a British subject, he was amenable to British laws; but when the independence of the United States was declared, and the institutions of government were established, of course he became amenable to the government under which he lived, and was absolved from the former government, and owed it no allegiance. I mean by this, that Christians who know the truth, who have been introduced into the light of the religion of Jesus Christ, are absolved from all other laws and considerations, and are called upon to live to Christ, as you are called upon to live to the republican institutions of your country, and to the laws of the land. The laws of the Lord Jesus Christ, the spirit of wisdom, and grace, and love, and charity, are principles to which the Christian is bound to live. And to live to Christ, is to live according to the spirit and the principles, which governed the Saviour of sinners. The Christian should always have his leader in view. He should have his divine Master in his eye. My friendly hearers, we should always feel as if bound to follow the directions and spirit of our blessed Redeemer. The same mind that was in Christ, should be in us. By the same mind, is meant the same disposition to love our enemies, to love sinners. Christ not only preached this doctrine, but he practiced it in his life, and died in its spirit. His last breath was employed in uttering that memorable prayer, which should always be in the minds of

Christians: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." In this spirit, with this heavenly wisdom, in this grace, did our Saviour lay down his life a ransom for mankind—for all the human race. And when this principle of love—mark well—when this principle of love shall have conquered all opposition, and when it shall have inspired every heart with the spirit of Christ, then will the doctrine be proved true effectually, that Jesus is the Saviour of the world. We believe in the salvation of all men, because God loves them all, and Christ loves them all. And we know, that if this love prevails, all mankind will be saved. And agreeably to the Apostle's testimony, we expect the accomplishment of this most glorious enterprise. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth,—and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." What is it to bow the knee to Christ? It is to bow our wills to the spirit of his love. We must possess pure love to God, and love to man. Love must be with us a sovereign principle, to which we must yield obedience. Aside from this, all our profession is as sounding brass, and as a tinkling cymbal. This heavenly spirit of the love of Christ constrains us, and we judge, that is, we come to this conclusion—that Christ died to manifest the love of God to the world. The Apostle says, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." This principle must save man from

sin, and bring him into obedience to his heavenly Father.

It is the fervent desire of your humble servant, that every believer in the gospel of Jesus Christ should feel the power, the operation, and the spirit of this love of Christ. If we have this spirit of love within us, the very name of Christ will be sweet to our ears. What do you suppose was the effect upon the Grecian soldiers, when they heard the name of Leonidas pronounced? The mention of that name would cause the blood to flow faster in their veins, and inspire a determination not to be conquered!— I could mention names of our own countrymen—the name of Washington. When you hear it pronounced, what is the sensation produced? You think of the father of your country—of the man who held the sword, who defended the land, who redeemed the country, and set it at liberty. You think of the man whose marches, and counter-marches are proudly rehearsed in our country's story, and whose name causes the patriot's heart to thrill with gratitude.— And you remember the goodly Lafayette. He left fortune, home, and all that was dear beneath the skies, for the love of liberty—for his love to America. How do you feel when you hear his name? It causes emotions of gratitude, affection and love. And can you experience such feelings when these names are pronounced, and be careless, lifeless, and dead in feeling, when the name of Jesus is sounded in your ears! Let this blessed name stir you up to every principle of his religion. Never pronounce it without considering the great obligation that rests upon you, in consequence of the mighty exhibition

of God, through his divine image. Think of what the world would have been, if the religion of the Saviour had not been given to mankind; and you will feel that to it you owe more than your existence. You owe to it all that is dear to you—you owe to it *yourself*; all the faculties and powers of your souls—your might and strength you owe to the promotion of that blessed cause for which Jesus bled, for which Jesus died. “He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”

“The Christian lives to Christ alone,
To Christ alone he dies.”

I cannot, as I am about to leave you, forego this opportunity of acknowledging to my friends in this city, the great obligations I am under, for their kind attention to me since I have been here. And though this may probably be the last time that I shall address you in the land of the living, yet so long as respiration and recollection continue with me, your favours and your kindness will be remembered with grateful emotions, and with the most sincere wishes for your felicity.

APPENDIX.

ANECDOTE OF JOHN MURRAY.

In speaking of Jesus in the character of a Witness, page 15, the speaker very properly observed, that the Messiah came into the world to *bear witness to the truth*, and not to create it. It follows, that the thing to be believed is true *before* it is believed, and consequently cannot be affected either by the faith or unbelief of man. The argument is easily understood, and the bearing of it obvious—but the more deeply to impress it on the mind of the reader, the following anecdote is introduced.

John Murray, whose name as a preacher of Universalism is gratefully embalmed in the recollection of our churches, was, when a young man, a member of Mr. Whitefield's church, in London. He had heard much of Mr. Relly, a preacher of the reconciliation of all things, and considered him an exceedingly dangerous man. A young lady, a member of the church to which Mr. Murray belonged, had embraced the sentiments of Mr. Relly, and Mr. Murray was sent, in company with two or three of his brethren, to convince her of her error. The following is Mr. Murray's account of the interview:—

“After the first ceremonies, we sat for some time silent; at length I drew up a heavy sigh, and uttered a pathetic sentiment, relative to the deplorable condition of those who live and die in unbelief; and I concluded a violent declamation, by pronouncing, *with great earnestness, He that believeth not, shall be damned.*

‘And pray, sir,’ said the young lady, with great sweetness, ‘Pray, sir, what is the unbeliever damned for not believing?’ What is he damned for not believing? *Why, he is damned for not believing.*

‘But, my dear sir, I asked what was that, which he did not believe, for which he was damned?’ Why, for not believing in Jesus Christ, to be sure.

‘Do you mean to say, that unbelievers are damned for not believing there was such a person as Jesus Christ?’ No, I do not; a man may believe there was such a person, and yet be damned.

‘What then, sir, must he believe, in order to avoid damnation? Why he must believe that Jesus Christ is a complete Saviour.

‘Well, suppose he were to believe that Jesus Christ was the complete Saviour of others; would this belief save him?’ No; he must believe that Christ Jesus is his complete Saviour; every individual must believe for *himself that Jesus Christ is his complete Saviour.*

‘Why, sir, is Jesus Christ the Saviour of any *unbeliever*?’ No, madam.

‘Why, then, should any *unbeliever* believe that Jesus Christ is his Saviour, *if he be not his Saviour*?’ I say he is not the Saviour of any one, until he believes.

‘Then, if Jesus be not the Saviour of the *unbeliever* until he *believes*, the *unbeliever* is called upon to believe a lie. It appears to me, sir, that Jesus is the complete Saviour of *unbelievers*; and that *unbelievers* are called upon to believe the truth; and that, by *believing they are saved, in their own apprehension, saved from all those dreadful fears*, which are consequent upon a state of conscious condemnation.’ No, madam; you are dreadfully, I trust not fatally, misled. Jesus never was, nor never will be, the Saviour of any *unbeliever.*

‘Do you think Jesus is your Saviour, sir?’ I hope he is.

‘Were you *always* a believer, sir?’ No, madam.

‘Then you were once an *unbeliever*; that is, you once believed that Jesus Christ was not your Saviour. Now, as you say he never *was*, nor never *will be*, the Saviour of any *unbeliever*, as you were once an *unbeliever*, he never can be your Saviour.’ He never was my Saviour till I believed.

‘Did he never die for you, till you believed, sir?’ Here I was extremely embarrassed, and most devoutly wished myself out of her habitation; I sighed bitterly, expressed deep commiseration for those souls, who had nothing but head-knowledge; drew out my watch, *discovered it was late*; and, recollecting an engagement, observed it was time to take leave.”—*Life of Murray*, chap. iv.

INTERESTING INCIDENT.

Universalists have frequently had occasion to remark, that if men would reason in reference to the Divine economy, as they reason concerning other matters, they would discard many of the false notions which have a tendency to perplex and distress their minds, and consequently to create much unhappiness in human society. This observation was specially induced by some remarks of the preacher,

on page 17; and the following incident is introduced for the farther edification of the reader. It occurs in an account of Mr. Ballou's journey from Boston to Watertown, N. Y. in 1824:—

“The day after, a widow, belonging to Pittsfield, Mass. entered the stage in that town to go to Denmark, in the state of New York, to visit her young son, whom she had not seen for six years, who is now about fifteen. This lady, I found to be quite orthodox in her views, and quite disposed to question me concerning mine. At the inn in Albany, where the stage put up, we had some very serious conversation on the subject of the ignorance and unbelief of men. Her queries respecting this subject were directed in the usual way, and were designed to prove that in consequence of unbelief in the Saviour, the sinner is exposed to be cast off without mercy. Having noticed in this lady an anxious desire to find her child, and perceiving that her affections were tender towards her fatherless son, I thought proper to try to open her eyes by the means of appealing to her maternal affections. Madam, do you think that your son will know you? She with manifest emotion replied; “It is so long since he saw me, that I do not think he will.” And should you find that he has so forgotten you as not to recognize your person and countenance, do you think he would be in danger, on that account, of losing your favour? Tears started in her eyes, and the weight of the question was sensibly manifest. She replied in the softest accents in the negative. Well, madam, should you find that your son has forgotten your countenance, and should you inform him of the fact of which you should find him ignorant, and yet he should not believe, should you then feel unkindly toward your son? She fully appreciated the question, and still answered in the negative. I then called her attention to that remarkable passage in the 49th of Isaiah, in which the Divine loving kindness is recommended to exceed the compassions of the mother to her tender offspring. She signified her satisfaction, and gave me to understand that the argument had reached its object.”—*Univ. Mag.* vol. vi. p. 93.

REASONS FOR PREACHING THE TRUTH.

In Sermon III., page 49, the preacher mentions the fact, that some grave divines declare they would not preach Universalism, even if they believed it! Many persons have been disposed to inquire, “What use is there in preaching, if all mankind are eventually to be

saved?" To answer said inquiry, the following article from Mr. Ballou's pen is introduced:—

"We have been often asked, why we preach the doctrine we profess, as this doctrine maintains that our Creator has made the eternal state secure to all men, and that the happiness of that state rests on the Divine favour, and not on any belief which we may exercise in this life? No doubt it seems unaccountable to our opposers, that we should argue so much, preach so much, and write and publish so much, when after all we do not pretend that our eternal state of happiness depends on these exertions. They do not see why, allowing our doctrine true, it would not be good policy to say nothing about it. Then we might enjoy the esteem of the pious of all denominations, and be regarded by the religious community, avoid all the censure which is now put upon us, and still enjoy our own opinions in silence.

Now that our conduct in this case is not so unaccountable as our opposers seem to think, a few remarks will evidently show.

Suppose my acquaintance with my earthly father to be such, as to give me the most favourable opinion of his whole character, so that I view him as one of the best of husbands; one of the most provident and kind fathers; a man of uprightness in all his conduct, against whom nothing in truth can be spoken. Suppose, under these circumstances, being full of love and reverence of my father, I hear him evilly spoken of, and that too by those who profess to be acquainted with him; yea, by those to whom people in general look for information, and on whose testimony the most of people are disposed to place confidence. They go so far in their evil speaking as to represent the parent whom I love, as guilty of acts of injustice and cruelty which deny him the smallest share of humanity. What am I to do in this case? I have ample proof in my hands to stop the mouths of these evil reporters, and I can do it effectually. Besure I must exert myself in the use of the means which are at my disposal, and I shall, no doubt, incur the displeasure of my father's traducers; all this is of course to be expected. But here I am told, that almost all the people, composing community at large, are really of the opinion of those who thus speak evil of my father; and that, even if I know all these reports to be false, I had better say nothing about the matter, as it will only bring me into discredit. Suppose I should be weak enough to hesitate, and even shrink from the defence of my venerable father's character, should I not feel ashamed of myself? What could be more base in me than silence and inaction?

Look again and see how such a case would be aggravated by circumstances. My father told me, that these traducers would speak evil

of him, and on this very account put into my possession every kind of evidence, which is necessary to refute all those evil reports; and charged me, by the dear relation in which we stand to each other, and by the love which we have reciprocated, to be faithful in the defence of his character. Shall I be silent? Shall I be afraid that those who despise my father will also despise me? Shall I purchase their smiles at the expense of a character which is dearer than life?—What would it avail to urge in this case, that almost every one in community would be against me? Is not this circumstance my justification? Surely; for if people did not believe the false reports, before mentioned, there would be no need of disproving them.

But this subject admits of argument still more forcible. Suppose those who speak evil of my father are my brethren, and his own beloved children; and suppose furthermore, that all who are deceived by this evil speaking are so likewise. We now have the whole difficulty in one family. My brethren are deceived concerning our father's character and conduct. He has never done those base things which they think he has. But they really believe these errors, and are tormented day and night with fear that they and their children will fall under the dreadful scourge of our father's wrath! Now as I know that all their notions are false, and that it is a fact that the whole family are abundantly provided for, day by day, by the kindness and love of our father, can I, under these circumstances, be justified in not making even an effort to convince them of their errors? Here we see that the honour of our father, the comfort and happiness of all the children, the cause of truth and justice, all unite in calling on me to open the evidences, which our father has put into my hands for this purpose, to give the knowledge of the truth to those who need it."—*Univ. Mag.* vol. ix. p. 26.

INDUCEMENTS TO HOLINESS.

The following considerations on this important subject, are taken from the *Universalist Magazine*, vol. i. p. 7.

“For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.”—*PSALM lxxxiv.* 10. Here is an acknowledgment of something known by experience. This humble, ardent votary of divine worship knew very well the business and amusements of life. No doubt he had learned by actual experience the great anxiety of worldly concerns, and the empty vanities of the fashions and amuse-

ments which engaged the minds of the giddy multitude. These uncertain, versatile things come short of giving the noble, the intellectual offspring of God that satisfaction and enjoyment which the reasonable soul requires. But in the devotions of the house of God, and in the solemn services of the holy sanctuary, the rational mind had, by happy experience, found that real, substantial enjoyment which is here acknowledged in such highly comparative terms.—One day is better than a thousand;—and the lowest service in the house of God is rather to be chosen, than the best accommodations that wickedness can afford. This is genuine religion. Its meanest services are preferable to the most honourable employment of sin.—False views of religion are widely different from this very just representation. We are often exhorted to get religion, to practice religion, and to endeavour to promote its cause among men, not because it is rather to be chosen for its own virtue in preference to irreligion, but because the Divine Being has seen fit to promise a vast reward for its services in the future, eternal state. While on the contrary he has determined to punish everlastingly those who are not religious in this life. In arguing against the blessed and glorious doctrine of God's universal goodness to mankind, the opposer often contends that this doctrine strikes at the very vitals of piety and devotion; for “if the irreligious in this world are to share the Divine favour in the next, then there is no necessity of being pious, or religious in this world. Men may just as well live in sin, and commit every abomination as to break off their sins by righteousness, and their wickedness by repentance and reformation of life.” They often enlarge greatly on this theme, and endeavour to surprise their hearers with the character of this wicked, dangerous doctrine of Universalism, which denies the necessity of repentance, of faith in Christ, of regeneration, and even of good works; which sets at naught the duties of religion and of devotion, and holds that men, even all men, can go to heaven in their sins!

These disputants, we think, do not understand the doctrine which they endeavour to oppose, nor do they understand the nature of true piety and devotion to God, and religion. That is, they have not the views of piety and devotion which are expressed in our text. For the opinion which they hold forth is, that if all men are to fare alike in the eternal world, and are there to enjoy the favour of God, it is best to live in all manner of sin while we continue here. But the author of our text said, “A day in thy courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.” Now if one day in the service of God is better than a thousand days spent in sin, how much would a

man gain in fifty years by serving God, more than by living in wickedness? And if the meanest service in the house of God is better than the best accommodations of sin, where is the propriety of persuading our fellow-creatures, that there is more happiness in sin, than in righteousness?

It really seems that many people marry to religion from no better motive than one takes a companion in wedlock, not because of love to the person, but because of a large dowry. In this case deception would be masked with great pretensions to love, and the deceiver would be full of *words* on this engaging topic. But should the pretended lover find that the expected wealth does not exist, and that the person is all the treasure, then would the deceiver manifest the truth and show at once that hypocrisy and not love reigned in the heart.

Pure religion will never give her holy hand to such hypocritical lovers, but there are false religions enough to accommodate all such hypocrites, and they are equally mated. But the pure heart which loves the service of God, one who can say, "I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness," has a treasure which he prizes far above rubies.

ORIGINAL ANECDOTE.

The frequent use made by Mr. Ballou of the history of Joseph and his brethren, the parable of the prodigal son, and the case of Saul of Tarsus, has by many been considered an objection to his manner of discoursing. To this it has generally been replied, that said illustrations, as used by Mr. Ballou, present innumerable bearings; and that he seldom introduces them without communicating a new idea, elicited by some particular point in the narrative. The following original anecdote may not be out of place:

After the delivery in a certain city (not Philadelphia) of the discourse which in this volume is entitled "Influence of Divine Grace," one Universalist minister said to another, in a good-humoured way, "The old man is always *harping* on Joseph and his brethren, the prodigal son, and Saul of Tarsus!" "Well," said the other, "it is a good *harp*, nevertheless, and Mr. Ballou knows how to play upon it. He always plays a *new tune*, and I could listen to him all night!"

RECOMPENSE OF WELL-DOING.

With Universalists it is a cardinal principle, that *duty* and *interest* are substantially the same. By this we mean, that no man can promote his true interest by a neglect or violation of his duty; and that he who carefully regards the monitions of the Spiritual Father docs, at the same time, subserve his own true interest. The ground-work and results of this general principle, are pointed out by Mr. Ballou, in the following article, which is extracted from the *Universalist Magazine*, vol. vii. pp. 89, 90.

“For God is paid when man receives;
T’ enjoy is to obey.”—*Pope*.

According to this approved maxim, our heavenly Father requires nothing of us merely for his own benefit, but solely for our enjoyment. Now that we may know for ourselves, that this sentiment is verily correct, it is only necessary to examine carefully and minutely what God has commanded us to do, and what not to do, and the natural tendency of obedience, in relation to our enjoyments. And if further argument were needed, it might be amply supplied by duly calculating the inevitable consequences of disobedience, relative to ourselves.

There seems to be no necessity of proving that the Creator and upholder of all things can receive no benefit from it, for this is granted by all, as it must be, so long as the infinite fulness of God is by all acknowledged.

The Supreme law-giver requires that we love him with all the heart, without the least reservation. Let us examine this requirement, that we may understand how intimately it is connected with our moral felicity. Obedience to this command can never be rendered until every attribute which we behold in God appears to us to be entirely lovely. So long as error presents us with any attribute in the divine Being, which appears, in any way, unlovely, it is impossible that we should love him with all the heart; there must be a reservation corresponding with the exceptionable attribute which error has figured to the mind. But when every dark cloud has passed away, when every spot has disappeared, and one bright flame of celestial glory forms the character of God, the enraptured beholder is attracted by a resistless charm, and exclaims, “Thou art altogether lovely!”

Though this transporting vision may be of short duration, owing to the variations incident to imperfect minds, yet while it continues

there seems to be a full compliance with the divine command; and also, at the same moment, a bliss is enjoyed, which is as perfect as the love which fills the heart and exerts all its powers.

The view here taken of this first and great command discovers the necessary relation between obedience and enjoyment, and gives the understanding full conviction of the fact, that complete obedience is complete happiness. It evidently belongs to this subject, to try the reverse, that we may understand that our infelicity must necessarily correspond with our want of conformity to the divine command, just noticed. If it be acknowledged that love constitutes our happiness, it follows, of course, that our infelicity must correspond with our want of love, and rise in an exact ratio with our hatred.

If we examine the divine requirement, in which our duty to one another is enjoined, we shall at once be satisfied that he who commanded us to love our neighbours as ourselves, saw that our happiness necessarily depended on this duty, and designed the commandment and ordained it unto life. It seems impossible to express this doctrine more plainly or more beautifully than in the words of the sweet singer of Israel: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard; even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forever more." But that our conviction may come short in nothing, let the opposite of this happy fraternity be examined. What now presents itself? Rational human beings acting contrary to reason and in violation of humanity, hateful and hating one another, while every evil work is the employment of their hearts and hands. The weight and measure of all this wickedness, is the exact weight and measure of infelicity endured by these workers of iniquity, and the distance they are from loving each other as they love themselves, is the precise distance they are from that enjoyment which satisfies the soul.

Keeping in view the maxim of the poet, which heads these remarks, and endeavouring to preserve a due harmony in the arguments here presented, I will add, by way of conclusion, that the two commandments, which have been noticed, are a perfect example of the whole duty of man in all its various operations, through its infinite variety of particulars; and that our arguments relative to them, will apply, exactly, to every duty binding on us, as rational, moral beings.

BLINDING INFLUENCE OF PREJUDICE.

When the venerable Murray resided and preached in Boston, a young man from the interior of Massachusetts, went into that town to establish himself in business. On leaving the paternal mansion, the father, who was a rigid Calvinist Baptist, was above all things, very particular in charging his son to beware of that *dreadful Murray*, and his more *dreadful doctrine*. Dr. Stillman was a great favourite of the father, though it seems he was not sufficiently acquainted with him to recognize his person. On *his* meeting, he charged his son to attend, and in *his* sentiments to have implicit confidence: adding, "Go not near that Murray, on peril of your soul's eternal destruction; for his doctrine is the snare of satan."

When a person is prohibited in that which he sees free to others, a greater desire is generally created by the very prohibition, to know what the "forbidden fruit" can be. It was so with this young man. For some time he remembered and rigidly regarded the paternal injunction; but his curiosity increasing, the more he thought upon the subject,—and considering "himself sage," he at length ventured to hear Mr. Murray deliver a lecture. The young man was much disappointed. He had expected, according to the assurance of his father, to hear every thing *bad*; but nothing fell from the lips of the venerable speaker, which was not, on the contrary, *very good*. So agreeable was his disappointment, that he renewed his attendance on Mr. Murray's meeting; till at length he became a believer in the final restoration, and joined Mr. M.'s society.

The father, hearing of his son's alteration in his views, harnessed his horse with all possible haste, and drove, Jehu like, into town.—It was of a Saturday night that he arrived, and he hastened to accuse his son of infidelity, and to warn him of his eternal danger.—After considerable conversation upon the subject of doctrines, which had the effect to make the enraged father a little more conciliatory, it was agreed, on the morning of the Sabbath, that the father should attend the *son's* meeting in the *forenoon*; and in the *afternoon* the son should the *father's*. The son's meeting was Mr. Murray's; and the father's, Dr. Stillman's. Accordingly, at the proper time, they both set out for Mr. M.'s place of worship, but as the father was a stranger in town, the son succeeded in conducting him to *Dr. Stillman's* meeting, which the former supposed all the while to be *Mr. Murray's*. On returning from meeting, the young man inquired, "Well, sir, how did you like *my* minister?" "Oh," said the father, "*he was most abominable; there was not a word of truth in all he said; don't I conjure you, go there again.*"

According to agreement, the son was to accompany the father in the afternoon. "Now," said the old man, "we shall hear something from Stillman, by which I pray you may be benefitted." The son conducted him to *Mr. Murray's* meeting. The father, *supposing Mr. M. to be Dr. S.* swallowed every word most eagerly, occasionally calling the attention of his son, to the animating speaker. After their return, the old man was again interrogated—"How did you like the discourse?" "*Most excellently,*" said the father, "*that is what I call the truth—the bread of life. If you would be wise, my son, attend where we attended this afternoon, and believe the doctrine there preached—but beware of the doctrine of Universal Salvation; it will ruin your soul.*"

The son smiled at the prejudice of his father, saying: "How totally does prejudice blind us. This day, my parent, 'I have caught you with guile.' The sermon you heard in the morning, and which you so much abominated, was not delivered, as you supposed, by 'that dreadful Murray,' but by your idol Stillman. He it was, whom you have just charged me to avoid. And he, who preached this afternoon, whose doctrines you so eagerly swallowed, and so zealously extolled, was that very Mr. Murray, whom you so much despised. Henceforth, let us learn to abate the violence of our prejudices, and to condemn no man or his sentiments unheard."—*Chr. Intel.* 1825.

ADDRESS OF THE PHILADELPHIA INSTITUTE.

DECEMBER 11, 1834.

The Philadelphia "YOUNG MEN'S UNIVERSALIST INSTITUTE," to the young men enjoying the same precious faith, wherever scattered abroad—GREETING:

Brethren—The improvement of the mind is a subject which cannot be too warmly urged upon the attention of rational beings.—Created, as mankind have been, in the spiritual image of the living God, possessing a capacity for improvement which the Deity has seen proper in infinite wisdom to deny to the lower orders of creation, and susceptible, as we are, of making undefined advancements in useful knowledge, it behoves us duly to realize the obligations which the possession of intellectual powers impose; and it also becomes us so to improve the talent and opportunity we enjoy, as shall evince that we are neither ungrateful for the favors conferred upon us by the Author of our being, nor insensible to the weighty advantages

which must ever be consequent of due attention to the improvement of the mind.

The cultivation of an acquaintance with matters of a religious character is, in our humble judgment, especially incumbent on the race of man. Constituted religious beings, and furnished with so many facilities for increasing the store of divine knowledge, mankind are peculiarly and solemnly obligated to yield to this matter, the attention its importance demands. And we should not be unmindful that every advance made in a knowledge of divine things, has the promise of a proportionate increase of the spiritual happiness so suitable to our moral nature.

Impressed with these and similar considerations, a number of the young men attached to the First Universalist Society in Philadelphia, and others, organized the "*Young Men's Universalist Institute*;" and the experience of more than nine months having satisfied us of the utility of such institutions, we have thought proper to lay the subject before you in the form of an address.

An article in our Constitution declares, that "the primary object of this Institute shall be the improvement of our minds in reference to an acquaintance with the doctrine of the final reconciliation of all things." We need not state that this doctrine is the most prominent and important feature of the revelation from God to man; nor need we inform you, that it is of all subjects the most glorious and sublime. It is a theme in the contemplation of which every Christian Philanthropist must rejoice; and it is a doctrine which, in our judgment, is peculiarly and super-eminently honorable to God, and conducive to the well-being of mankind. It seems to follow, that he who is most intimately acquainted with the proofs, bearings, and influences thereof, must have the most honorable and reverential views of the Supreme Being; and that he who is most deeply imbued with its heavenly and life-giving spirit, must enjoy the most of that celestial peace which our Divine Master guaranteed to those who believe and obey the truth.

To effect the aforesaid primary object of our Institute, we assemble one evening in each and every week. The first half-hour is devoted by the members to the perusal of such books or papers as may be at the disposal of the society. We are happy to say, that the publishers of the several religious periodicals published in Philadelphia, have cheerfully complied with our request for a gratuitous copy of their works.

At the expiration of the first half-hour above referred to, the President calls to order, and reads a chapter from the New Testament, immediately following the lesson of the preceding meeting. The

subject is then open for remark. Each member is at liberty to offer such observations and suggestions on any part of the chapter, as may occur to him, and in this manner about an hour is usually devoted. After the subject is declared to be closed for the evening, the President may call upon any member to read aloud such printed sermon or essay on the Evidences of Christianity, or other useful topic, as to him may appear most suitable for the occasion. The meeting is then adjourned.

In addition to our stated weekly meetings, we have a regular monthly lecture delivered in our hall, by such member of the Institute as may be appointed for that purpose. To the monthly lectures a general invitation is given, while to the stated weekly meetings such young men only are admitted as may be introduced by the members.

We have laid the foundation for a library of useful books; and we hope in time to own a collection of Theological works, which will materially assist us in accomplishing the object contemplated in our organization.

We may here remark, that our current expenses are discharged by a stated monthly contribution from each of the members.

Having thus briefly stated the primary object of our Institute, and the general manner of procedure at our meetings, it may be proper to notice a few of the advantages which must result from institutions of the same general character.

Basing our faith, as we do, in the testimony of divine revelation, many benefits must result from a careful investigation of the sacred oracles. In addition to the profit immediately accruing to ourselves, there are advantages which must thence arise in reference to our opposing brethren. We naturally feel a desire to bring others to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, to the end that we may rejoice together in the great salvation of our God. But we cannot reasonably hope to bring our neighbours into the light, if we ourselves are in darkness. We must know not only *what* we believe, but *why* we believe; and we must know this in such a manner as will enable us to give a reason of the hope that is within us. And the only way in which we can obtain this desirable knowledge, is, by *studying the Scriptures*. Unity of effort will enable us to become more intimately acquainted with the subject matter of revelation, than we could reasonably hope for from unassisted individual investigation.

Besides, in meetings of the kind referred to in this Address, young men have opportunities for improvement in public speaking. And as none but friends and acquaintances are permitted to be present when the members offer their remarks, much of the restraint and

timidity experienced by those unaccustomed in this way to express their thoughts, is removed. The particular advantages growing out of this consideration, are so apparent, as to preclude the necessity for enlargement.

Not among the least of the benefits resulting from associations correspondent to the general character of our Institute, is, the acquaintance, and consequent friendship, formed between young men of a common faith. Union is strength—but union supposes acquaintance, no less than a community of interest. Many of us can refer to a period not two years since, when we were but partially acquainted one with another, though attendants generally of the same religious meeting; and we are satisfied that the want of social intimacy has been, and still is, a bar to the prosperity and enjoyment of many religious societies.

In connexion with the primary object of our Institute, *original essays* on moral and religious subjects are presented and read before the members by those of our number who choose thus to employ a portion of their leisure hours. The advantages of this measure are equally apparent with the particulars before adverted to: and we believe that a little reflection will satisfy all our young brethren every where, of the utility of such institutions as are herein spoken of.

May we not, then, confidently and affectionately recommend this matter to your early and energetic attention? We feel fully convinced, that were such an Institute established by the young men attached to every Universalist Society in the land, the members would not only be promoting their own individual interests; but they would also be specially instrumental in furthering “the faith once delivered to the saints.”

Brethren think of these things; and may He of whom and whose we are, direct our minds into the way of life, and our feet to the paths of pleasantness and peace.

In behalf of the Institute.

ELIJAH DALLETT, JR. *President.*

Attest. WM. SAYRE HEYSHAM, *Sec'y.*

MORALITY OF UNIVERSALISM.

As the evidences which support the doctrine of Universal Salvation multiply to the understanding of its opposers, and as their weight accumulates in the sober judgment of men, as is natural in all such cases, efforts are made to stigmatize a doctrine, against which, neither

Scripture nor reason can be made to bear testimony. Not unlike this kind of procedure was the conduct of the old Pharisees, who endeavoured to stigmatize the uncontrovertible miracles of Jesus, as being effected by the agency of Beelzebub. Affected piety, which, like Jehu, calls on all to behold its zeal for the Lord, loudly and eloquently contends that the doctrine of Universal Salvation is dangerous to the interests of religion and morality, and that it therefore ought not to be countenanced in society, even if it is true. When learned ministers can find reason to justify themselves, in making such declarations, the many who are in the habit of believing what their preachers say, without giving themselves the trouble of inquiring concerning the strict propriety of what comes from the sacred desk, are ready to give to such statements full and unreserved credit. It can be of but little use to try the power of the most convincing testimony and argument to convince people who have imbibed these notions of the truth of a doctrine, which they are confident would demolish the whole superstructure of religion and morality. People in general are not prepared to see the cause of religion forsaken; they cannot be persuaded to dismiss themselves from all moral obligations, for the sake of embracing a doctrine, which they believe would eventuate in such deplorable consequences. Behind such a battery as this, the clergy who oppose the doctrine of Universal Salvation, feel themselves tolerably secure; and will so continue until this refuge of lies be removed.

The reader is now called on to consider cautiously this great and formidable objection. He is not now invited to examine the evidences in favour of this doctrine, which is supposed to be so pernicious in its effects; but to examine the objection itself, and by itself. The question is this; is it reasonable to believe, that, if the doctrine of Universal Salvation were generally received, and entire confidence placed in its divine reality, religion would disappear, and all moral obligations be disregarded?

How shall we try a question of such importance?—How and where shall we make our first attack on this most formidable fortress? Driven from every other entrenchment, our enemy has concentrated his whole force at this one single point! Here then we meet him; and here we are glad to meet him; for from this, his own chosen ground, he can never retreat. If he fails here, his defeat is complete and final.

Reader, if you entertain any fear, you are not in a suitable condition to engage in our proposed enterprise. This very fear is all which renders our adversary formidable. Look at that huge mass,

which appears like a mountain before you! There is no solidity there. Approach it, and it recedes!

What is religion, and in what does it consist? It is allowed by all, that its whole substance is love to our heavenly Father and to one another. Can a belief in God's *universal, unchangeable* and *efficient* goodness to man prevent our loving him and one another?—Was there ever a more gross absurdity? Go to the clergy, who often reiterate this objection, which we are now considering, and ask them if a belief that our Father in heaven loves all men, and has appointed us all to enjoy him forever, would alienate their affections from him, and from their fellow heirs of salvation? Will they answer in the affirmative? Then let them be honest, for once, and openly state that all the time in which they have pretended to desire the salvation of mankind, and in which they have offered up prayers to God, that he would graciously convert sinners, and sanctify them for heaven and happiness, they have acted the part of hypocrisy. If the prodigal's elder brother, who was angry with his father for receiving with compassion, his penitent son, had spent days and nights before in making supplications to his father, to have compassion on his brother, his anger would have betrayed an hypocrisy similar to this which characterises our opponents. But as the comparison now appears, it is much to the disadvantage of our adversaries. Let us admit another comparison. Suppose that those labourers in the vineyard who bore the burden and heat of the day, had, during their labours, made many petitions, even with tears, to the owner of the vineyard, in behalf of those who were spending their time idly in the market places; suppose they had expostulated with the master, and had endeavoured, by all possible persuasions, to move him to have compassion on them, and grant them the same blessed penny which they were to receive; their murmuring at the good man for giving them as much as they themselves received, would have resembled the complaints which are necessarily embraced in the objection under consideration. But our modern Pharisees have added one degree to the character of hypocrisy, which was reprimanded by the parables of the Saviour.

What is morality? Is it not the natural effects of our love to our Creator and to our fellow creatures? In relation to our neighbours, shall we not be moral, if we truly love them? And if the belief that our Father in heaven love them, connected with the examples of his love, will not induce us to love them, what will? If the goodness of God to ourselves, naturally alienates our hearts from him; and if the assurance of his favour to our fellow-creatures will naturally incline us to hate them, then is there validity in the objection we are con-

sidering; but if the reverse is true, then is the whole objection removed.

Let this general subject be tried by reducing it to a practical question, in a small circle. Let the parent of a family of children, father or mother, become fully persuaded that God does, in deed and in truth, love this whole family; that Jesus Christ is in fact the Saviour of this family; and that they are all the blessed heirs of everlasting life; will this belief render this parent unjust, unkind, and even unmerciful to this family? We know that nothing can be more repugnant to reason than such a conclusion.

Though it seems impossible to see this subject in a clearer light, we may look at it in the following shape. Let an affectionate mother be persuaded to believe that the infant in her arms is the object of divine indignation, and this mother's heart must either transform into the image of this indignation, or revolt from the being who is supposed to exercise it. And this evident fact leads us to reflect on what all history confirms; that the belief of eternal enmity in God has produced perpetual enmity in man.

It is a fact which no one will deny, who is acquainted with the history of the church, that its darkest ages have been the most free from the doctrine of Universal Salvation, and the most remarkable for impiety and immorality. And it is in sober faithfulness that we now assert, that the very image of hell has most manifestly appeared, in the unmerciful persecutions practised by those who believed in its strict eternity!

Those who urge the objection under consideration, are requested to name some sort of immorality, which has been unknown to the world, only when and where the doctrine of Universal Salvation has been believed. They are called on to hold up those impious frauds, which were never practised by a hierarchy who believed in the endless misery of millions of human beings, but which have been invented and practised by those few, who have believed and preached the doctrine of universal holiness and happiness.

While the writer of this regrets, with deep humility, the too visible want of conformity, in professed Universalists, to the pure maxims of our divine religion; he most sincerely thanks the Director of hearts, that there are so many, who profess a contrary faith, whose lives are infinitely better than the doctrine which they believe.—

Universalist Magazine, vol. vii. p. 206.

H. B.

AN ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.

Supreme Majesty of Heaven! wilt thou permit those sensitive powers, and faculties of mind, which thou hast combined in me, to speak in thine ear? Yes, I am assured, though thou art infinite in thy glorious perfections, it is not inconsistent with thy greatness to indulge the aspirations which it is thy pleasure to awaken in the most humble being which is the production of thy hand.

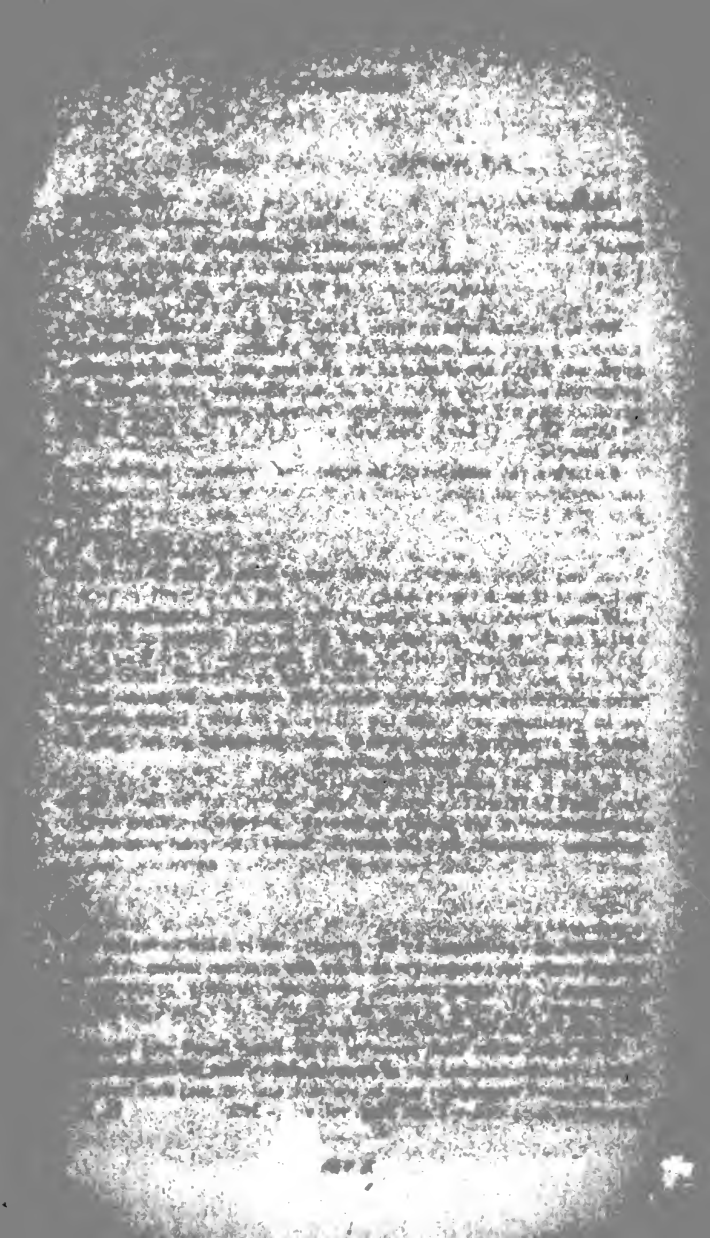
When I behold thee in those twinkling stars, which attract my wondering eyes, and contemplate thy wisdom, thy power and thy goodness, which are displayed, in all their perfections, in those unnumbered worlds, my heart and all my affections are kindled into devotion, and my whole soul becomes one flame of grateful incense on thine altar. O Lord, thou wilt accept it, for that flame is thine own breath.

And when the curtains of the night are withdrawn, and the glory and beauty of the morning call me from sweet and refreshing slumbers, and mine eyes are opened to behold the welcome ruler of the day, who advances, at thy command, to scatter unnumbered blessings through earth and sea, the outgoings of the morning rejoice my heart, and inspire devotions, which are as fervent and as acceptable to thee, as those of the evening.

When, directed by a portion of thy wisdom, I contemplate thy varied goodness, the productions of the several seasons of the year, which are abundantly ample to supply the wants of creation, and so perfectly adapted to the constitutions and appetites of those beings who wait to receive their food from thee, my heart becomes extended in gratitude, and seeks the fellowship of every living thing to assist in rendering to the giver of every good and perfect gift, the grateful homage due for such mercies.

But as it has suited the counsels of thine unerring wisdom, that man shall be raised to a scale of being, which shall be free from the imperfections of his earthly nature and constitution, thou hast, in goodness, appointed, that the imperfections of the present state shall serve to bring to dissolution our present mode of existence, that the more glorious may succeed. This, thy divine favour, thou hast brought to light through the brightness of thy glory, whom thou hast appointed Lord of the dead and of the living. When enlightened by thy word, and quickened by thy grace, I am enabled to realise these gospel truths, and connect with them thy gracious favour in the forgiveness of my transgressions, repentance, humility, gratitude, and joy unspeakable, seem to vie with each other, in a heart which now loves thee to the fulness of all its powers.

Wilt thou, O my God, preserve in me these hopes and joys, and keep alive this celestial fire of sweet devotion, that by their influence the powers of temptation may be resisted, and the soul that loves thee preserved from evil.—*Univ. Mag.* vol. vii. p. 102. H. B.



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